

**Biodiversity Conservation & Economic Growth
(BCEG) Project**

QUARTERLY REPORT

August-October 2002

Submitted by:

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Bulgaria Biodiversity Conservation and Economic Growth Project

is a collaborative initiative between the

**United States Agency for International Development
and the
Government of the Republic of Bulgaria**

implemented by

Associates in Rural Development, Inc.

Project Number LAG-I-00-99-00013-00, Task Order 01

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Acronyms

ARD	Associates in Rural Development, Inc.
BAS	Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
BCEG	Biodiversity Conservation and Economic Growth Project
BNR	Bulgarian National Radio
BSBCP	Bulgarian-Swiss Biodiversity Conservation Program
BTA	Bulgarian Telegraph Agency
CBNP	Central Balkan National Park
CCN	Contributing Country National
CHM	Clearing House Mechanism
COM	Council of Ministers
CPT	Core Planning Team
CRP	Contract Results Package
CTO	Cognizant Technical Officer
DEMNET	Democracy Network Program
DW	Deutsche Welle
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
GCF/CI	Global Conservation Fund/Conservation International
GEF	Global Environment Facility (note the acronym “GEF” is also generically in Bulgaria for the USAID/GEF Biodiversity project)
GIS	Geographic Information System
GOB	Government of Bulgaria
GPS	Global Positioning System
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation
GWU	George Washington University
HQ	Headquarters
IQC	Indefinite Quantities Contract
MOAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forests
MOE	Ministry of Economy
MOEW	Ministry of Environment and Waters
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEN	National Ecological Network
NGO	Non-Government Organization

NNPS	National Nature Protection Service (of MOEW)
NP	National Park
NPD	National Park Directorate
NTEF	National Trust Eco-Fund
NTFP/NTNR	Non-Timber Forest Products/Non-Timber Natural Resources
PCT	Project Counterpart Team
PHD	Program and Human Development
PMU	Project Management Unit
PS	Park Section
RMNP	Rila Monastery Nature Park
RNP	Rila National Park
SDC	Swiss Development Agency
SG	State Gazette
SOW	Statement of Work
STTA	Short-Term Technical Assistance
TOR	Terms of Reference
TV	Television
UD/FLAG	University of Delaware/Firm Level Assistance Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WTO	World Travel and Tourism Council

Preface

The Biodiversity Conservation and Economic Growth (BCEG) Project is funded by the United States Agency for International Development, (USAID), as part of its strategic support to the Republic of Bulgaria. The Project is sponsored by USAID in conjunction with the Government of Bulgaria – the Ministry of Environment and Waters (MOEW). The Project is governed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two governments, and its implementation covers the period: **May 2000 – March 2003**.

This Project is a logical evolution of earlier USAID assistance to biodiversity conservation in the country. It follows some 10 years of assessment, technical assistance and financing of Bulgaria's biodiversity conservation strategic development, new protected area legislation, and new national park institutions. The Project is designed to capitalize on the achievements of the Bulgaria Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Biodiversity Project (implemented during the period June 1995-April 2000), and builds on lessons learned.

The BCEG Project addresses six specific contract themes known as tasks or “contract result packages”. The BCEG Project includes the finalization and implementation of two national park management plans, the development of a new management plan for Rila Monastery Nature Park. It assists in the development of financial mechanisms and strategies to ensure the solvency of national parks. The Project pilots economic growth activities with select target groups around two Bulgarian national parks. And it continues to build on the principles of strong public information and awareness as stepping stones for informed public engagement and promotion of biodiversity conservation and protected area management activities.

This Project is issued as a Task Order (Contract Number LAG-I-00-99-00013-00) under the USAID Global Biodiversity and Forestry Indefinite Quantities Contract (IQC); and is implemented on behalf of USAID by Associates in Rural Development, (ARD) Inc., of Burlington, Vermont, USA.

The Project is implemented through a Project Management Unit (PMU) based in Sofia, and includes a Team Leader, three Bulgarian technical specialists, and support staff.

Project activities are coordinated through two mechanisms –

- (a) Project Coordination Group – serves as a steering committee for Project planning and monitors implementation. This consists of the National Nature Protection Service of the MOEW, and national park directors, the PMU and USAID.
- (b) Project Counterpart Team – PMU staff working with MOEW/NNPS counterparts

The Project is largely implemented through the Directorates for Rila and Central Balkan National Parks. Additional technical assistance is provided by Bulgarian and international consultants, and is based on specific terms of reference.

1.0 Introduction

BCEG Project activities are guided by a life of project work plan, implemented through an annual work plan. Reports regarding progress are required quarterly, and annually. This **Quarterly** report covers the period **August 2002 – October 2002**.

1.1 Project Supervision

USAID manages this contract through a project officer, Alicia Grimes, Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO), based in Washington D.C., Europe and Eurasia Bureau/EEST. The BCEG Project however, is one aspect of the USAID Mission to Bulgaria's "Special Initiatives and Cross-Cutting Programs". This unusual management structure is historical. Traditionally, the Project has also been supported and overseen by the Mission's PHD, in Sofia.

The USAID Mission to Bulgaria appointed an Environment and Natural Resources Specialist to its staff in March 2001. Among other program duties, the Specialist represents the Mission's interests to the Project, and is now a direct point of contact to the Mission's country program.

During this reporting period, Ms. Grimes was on maternity leave. Mr. Gerald Gold, was appointed as acting-CTO, with Mr. Gregory Myers providing technical back-stopping.

1.2 Bilateral Agreement

A Memorandum of Understanding is the formal tool governing the working agreement between the Governments of the United States of America and the Republic of Bulgaria. The MOU was signed between the Governments of the USA and Republic of Bulgaria, on November 30, 2000. The Memorandum reflects the respective commitment of each Government to the successful implementation of this Project.

An amendment to the MOU was requested in December of 2000, in order to reflect changes to a critical timetable in the agreement. ***Another amendment will be required to the MOU in order to reflect USAID's award of a no-cost extension until the end of March, 2003, for this Project.***

1.3 Project Coordination – Steering Committee

The Project is guided and reviewed on a regular basis by a Project Coordination Group – steering committee. This group is comprised of the PMU Technical Team, the Directors of both National Parks supported by the Project, a representative of the National Nature Protection Service (NNPS), and a USAID representative.

1.4 Project Counterparts

As required in the MOU, a Project Counterpart Team (PCT), was assigned in December of 2000. The counterpart team addresses the specific assignment of nationally based representatives of the Ministry of Environment and Waters, National Nature Protection Service, to specific tasks of the Project. These team members ensure more regular contact, joint project development, and communication with the Ministry.

Conservation, Protected Areas, and Management Planing	Mihail Mihailov
Eco-Enterprise	Raina Hardalova
Public Awareness	Diana Iskrevva
Counterpart Team Leader	Hristo Bojinov
Counterpart within the Ministry	Dep. Min. Iliaz

1.5 Work Plan and Contract Results

The Project received a no cost extension during this reporting period. The new end of project data is March 31, 2003.

The Work Plan is developed in response to the Project contract and its tasks. Each task is accomplished through a set of sub-tasks. The PMU has organized these tasks and sub-tasks in logical clusters supporting a hierarchy of expected results. As a consequence, we report on six contract results packages (CRP) – or distinct project themes. These include:

<i>Contract Result Package 1</i>	Finalize Management Plans for Rila and Central Balkan National Parks, and deliver to the Council of Ministers
<i>Contract Result Package 2</i>	Effective Management and Priority Actions of Management Plans Supported
<i>Contract Result Package 3</i>	Park-Related Eco-Enterprises Demonstrated for Ecotourism and Natural, Non-Timber Resources Collection
<i>Contract Result Package 4</i>	Mechanism for National Park Financial Sustainability Established
<i>Contract Result Package 5</i>	Rila Monastery Nature Park Management Plan Prepared
<i>Contract Result Package 6</i>	Public Awareness and Promotion Campaigns Implemented

Additional reporting themes are related to Project management and coordination, Networking and Partnerships, Special Project Issues, etc.

N.B. A no-cost extension was approved for this Project, in October. The End of Project contract date has been extended until March 31, 2003.

2.0 Results Framework

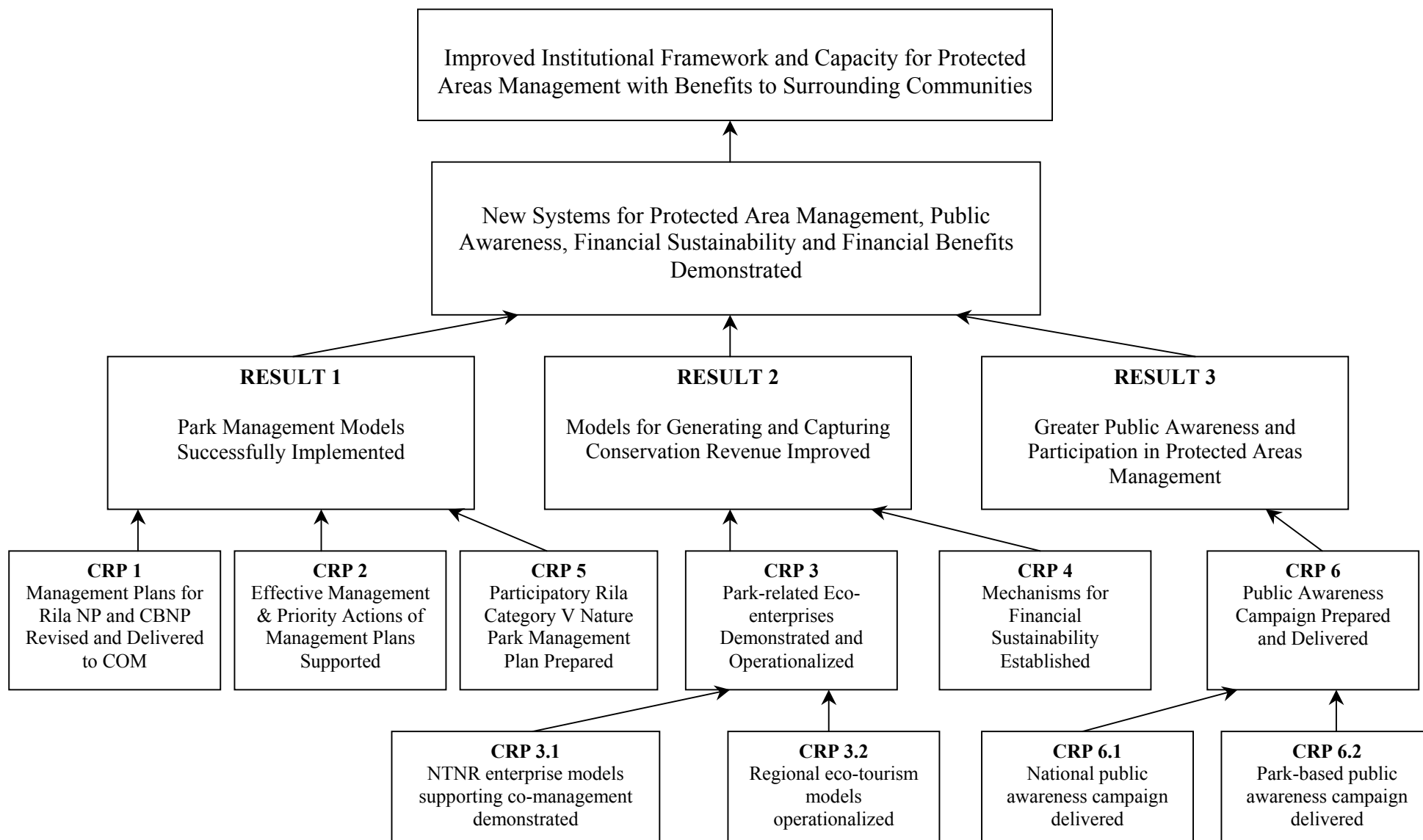
The aim of the Project is to contribute to the improved institutional framework and capacity for protected areas management in Bulgaria with benefits to communities surrounding key protected area sites.

A secondary objective is to demonstrate new systems for protected areas management, public awareness, financial sustainability and financial benefits. In order to achieve this hierarchy of objectives, the Project supports **three direct results**, or outcomes:

- Park management models are successfully implemented
- Models for generating and capturing biodiversity conservation revenue are improved; and,
- Greater public awareness and participation is demonstrated in protected areas management

Project reporting is guided by the six results packages. Our annual report uses the six results package to account a set of activities covered by the reporting period, and quantifies results/activities. A narrative also describes constraints to achievement of project targets.

The Project's results are illustrated below.

Figure 2.1 Results Framework

3.0 Planned Activities

Result 1 Park Management Models Successfully Implemented

This result is supported by three (3) contract results packages. Protected area management models continue to be developed through five major areas of support – and each is related to activities and themes of this Project. The five areas include:

1. Support for development of an enabling environment (Legislative Framework);
2. Management Planning – an interactive process conducted by a multi-disciplinary team;
3. Management Plan implementation – Technical and financial support for implementation of protected area (Park) programs and projects that are identified and approved in the Management Plans;
4. Technical training and capacity building at Park level; and
5. Public awareness and information

Park management models for Bulgaria have many important indicators of success. For the purpose of reporting at the level of Strategic Objective for USAID-Bulgaria, we have selected the following indicators of successful park management model implementation:

Number of contemporary protected area management practices adapted and implemented by Bulgarian National Park management.

“contemporary management practices” are defined as a “a set of recognized international protected area management approaches that include: conservation biology, habitat conservation, management zoning, tourist management, visitor interpretation and education , conservation management in a regional and landscape context, revenue generation, and work with surrounding communities to provide education and economic benefits”.

“adapted and implemented” are defined as “provided for in general management plans, developed in sufficient detail to effectively budget for, allocate personnel, and implemented on a pilot basis or incorporated into an operational system for the national park(s)”.

We consider the following management categories an indication of success, and monitor these activities with National Parks accordingly:

- Natural resource management activities implemented
- Tourist management and infrastructure projects implemented
- Interpretation and education programs established for tourists
- Local partnerships developed and nurtured
- Park Administrative Systems functioning
- Revenue Generating Project/activities implemented; and,
- Nature park management plans developed and approved.

Each one of these park management themes contains a number of representative projects/activities. For example:

“Natural resources management activities implemented”, would include:

- establishment of an ecological monitoring program;
- fire management and mitigation plan
- medicinal plants management plan

In order to continue our support to the development of these successful models, we are engaged in the following tasks – expressed as **results packages** – sets of tasks and sub-tasks that contribute to successful implementation of park models.

CRP 1 Management Plans for Rila and Central Balkan National Parks Revised and Delivered to Council of Ministers for Approval

Indicators	Target	Actual 4/02
Number of management plans revised and submitted to CoM	2	2
Number of public hearings (programs) conducted in support of management plan approval	2	2

The set of activities under this contract results are completed.

CRP 2 Effective Management and Priority Actions of Management Plans Supported

Indicators	Target	Actual 4/02
Number of annual operation plans guiding park management plan implementation*	4	4
Number of multi-year action plans guiding implementation of park management plans	2	2
Number of projects implemented per park management theme (5 per park)	10	14
Rila	5	7
Central Balkan	5	7
Number of public awareness strategies prepared and implemented during two year period	2	2
Number of training courses conducted in support of protected area management:		
✓ Rangers	10	6
✓ Park technical staff	7	6

* life of project target

** gray area added to qualify the difference in operations planning. Each park produced a three year action plan as part of its 10-year management plan.

Legislative Development and Policy Reform

Under the Task Order extension for this Project, USAID has formally included technical assistance by the Project in legislative development and policy reform.

Previously, and with CTO and Mission concurrence, the BCEG Project had provided input into matters of Government policy on the environment and biodiversity conservation.

1. Draft Biodiversity Act – because of its important role in securing biodiversity buffer zones around most protected areas; and,
2. Draft Environment Protection Act – because of its important role in supporting decentralization of environmental management, its role in describing important financial mechanisms for environmental management, and its role in enabling external funding to be channeled to protected areas.

Biodiversity Act

SG No 77 / August 2002

Our contributions to the development of this Act were finalized during the previous reporting period. A final draft of the Act was approved by a majority vote in Parliament, and sent to the President for promulgation in July. The President vetoed the Act on July 23 for motives related to changes in the power and scope of the MOEWs role in EIAs. These matters were clarified in the new Environmental Act, and sent to the President during the first week of August. The National Assembly over-rode the President's veto, and with these clarifications, the Bill has been passed.

The most significant result of the Project's assistance to legal provisions for ensuring the recognition of park buffer zones. These are areas surrounding national and nature parks, and critical to their ecological survival and critical genetic exchange. The appointment of "buffer zones" is now provided for in the context of the National Ecological Network.

During this same reporting period, the scope, duration and budget for the Danish support to the development of the National Ecological Network (NEN) was approved. Although the project has been reduced in scope and time (from 3 years to 1.5/2 years), it will still provide the much-needed framework for the designation of key biodiversity areas outside of the protected area network. The NEN is a critical part of Bulgaria's compliance with the EU-NATURA 2000 conservation landscape classification system.

Environment (Protection) Act

SG No 91 / September 2002

The Environment Protection Act was promulgated in the State Gazette in September. This framework law provides for the organization and structure of state bodies responsible for environmental management. It is the tool that sets fines for environmental pollution and contamination regulations, and it is also responsible for the framework for EIAs as a policy, investment, and project assessment tool. Additional important issues covered in the Act include the mechanisms, roles and responsibilities for levying local environmental taxes and fees. The Law addresses the National Environmental Protection Fund, and secures the future of the National Trust Eco-Fund, the internationally accepted mechanism for donations and debt-for-nature swaps with the Bulgarian Government.

The Project's most significant contribution to this Law has been the work regarding financial mechanisms and securing the independent status of the National Trust Eco Fund as a mechanism for biodiversity conservation and environmental management funding.

Management Plan Implementation

Management plan approval signaled an investment of USAID and GOB funds into capital development projects in both Parks. Earlier discussions with both Park Directorates and NNPS ensured that USAID project funds were coordinated with capital development funds available from the National Environment Protection Fund – formerly an extra-budgetary fund of the MOEW. From January 2002, the Fund has become a budgetary fund in response to fiduciary changes in Government's use of extra-budgetary items.

Annual Operations Plans, developed with BCEG Project technical advice, serve to guide park activities and capital investment.

Park investment projects were in full swing during this reporting period. The summer and fall months are the most productive for implementation of high-mountain activities. A status report for all park projects supported by USAID funding are listed as **Appendix 1** to this report.

Geographic Information System for both National Parks, and the NNPS

Digital Models and Maps - GIS

1. During this reporting period, both national parks' management zone borders were updated. CDs with the up-dated management zones were logged with both National Park Directorates and the NNPS.

The graphics capacity of each Park's digital model was used to develop tourist theme maps. These are the basis for new information signboards at all major and minor entrances to the Parks, and for entrances to Reserves.

- Produce zone maps for each Park section of both RNP and CBNP. 3 sets per park were produced and laminated (9 Park Sections in RNP and 8 Park Sections in CBNP),
 - Produce maps of each Park's reserves for their respective entrances boards;
 - Produce maps of the entire park territory for the primary entrances boards in each Park. 11 major entrance boards for CBNP and 8 major entrance boards for RNP.
2. The last data (graphic and attributes) for 315,9 ha of the territory of RNP was converted from land commission (ZEM format) files, and included into the digital model of the Park, according to the Order № RD-397/15.10.1999 for enlargement of the Park. This affects territory in the Borovets Park Section.
 3. A Manual for working with the automated program for transformation of GPS readings and converting the data into AutoCAD environment/GIS platform was finalized and sent to the National Park Directorates and the NNPS in hard copy and electronic formats.
 4. Boundaries of the localities of bilberries (*Vaccinium spp*) in the pilot area Park Sections for the two parks were drawn on 1:25,000 maps, digitized and input into each park's digital models as a thematic layer. This included the calculation of the total area of prime bilberry sites in each pilot area.
 5. Last digital models of the Rila Monastery Nature Park were taken from the Land commission in Rila municipality – for the lands of three villages affected by designation of Rila Monastery Nature Park, and not yet finalized. Land commission models for Pastra, Padala, and Rila monastery were again gathered because of inconsistencies in the park's boundaries provided by the MOAF.

Consultant Support

The Project retains the technical services of a GIS consultant. Mr. Ivan Kountchev, as a GIS advisor to NNPS and Parks. There was no significant consultant activity during this period.

Ecological Monitoring

Each Park's ecological monitoring program was taken up with financial support from the BCEG Project. As series of short-term consultancies and local contracts were used to initiate monitoring activities in each Park.

Bear Monitoring

The Terms of Reference have been drawn up and a short-term contract for consultancy services has been signed with Engineer Raicho Gunchev to develop a methodology for monitoring the brown bear in each Park. His contract includes the orientation and training of Park personnel.

In addition, a 2 days field visit of 2 experts from RNP (Krassimir Andonov, fauna expert and Roumen Kolchagov, park security specialist) was conducted to the Semkovo area for a preliminary reconnaissance of known bear areas/localities.

Souslik (Ground Squirrel) Monitoring

The Terms of Reference have been drawn up and a short-term contract for consultancy services has been awarded to Associate Professor, Vladimir Stefanov, of the Department of Biology, University of Sofia. He is working with national parks' staff to develop a methodology for monitoring the souslik population and training Park employees in its implementation. Stefanov has already conducted extensive, primary research on the souslik population in both Parks.

Bird Monitoring

A methodology was developed for monitoring the bird species selected for each Park by Senior Research Associate, Bojidar Ivanov of the BAS Institute of Zoology.

The methodology includes:

- Description of the observation method: steps, intervals, equipment, participants, etc.;
- Selected park sections and areas within them for observation of each separate species;
- Standard forms for data gathering and storage.

The expert visited the two parks and after consultations with the fauna experts of the NP Directorates, Anton Stanchev and Krassimir Andonov, provided the final version of methodology. Also taking part in the discussions were engineers Svetoslav Todorov (CBNP) and Roumen Kolchagov (RNP).

Forest Monitoring

Associate Professors Georgi Kostov and Stefan Mirchev of the Forestry University, Sofia, developed a methodology for monitoring and assessment of the general health and sanitary condition of forests, as well as their reproductive and regenerative potential.

Transects and sampling sites for observations and data gathering were selected for each of the NPs:

- For CBNP - One transect in Teteven Park Section (PS) – 4 sample plots were selected and three of them were finalized with all relevant measurements.
- For RNP – Two transects; one in Blagoevgrad PS (3 sample plots selected, 1 measured) and one in Yakoruda PS (4 sample plots selected, 1 measured)

Along with the field work, training courses in applying the methodology were conducted for the Forestry & Monitoring experts with the NP Directorates: forestry engineers Verka Ivanova, Roumyana Ficheva and Svetoslav Todorov; for the GIS experts: engineers Tatyana Maleshevska and Gencho Iliev, as well as for park sections heads and rangers.

The exact coordinates of the sampling sites along each transect were determined with the GPS units and entered into the digital models of the Parks.

Medicinal Plants Management Plan

A Terms of Reference to be used to guide the development of medicinal plants management plans for national parks was drafted during this reporting period. This is again a “first” for Bulgaria. At present, there are no guidelines or regulations governing the management and use of medicinal plants within protected areas. The first draft of this TOR was shared with NNPS, NPD, and BAS experts. Their feedback will be incorporated into the TOR. The TOR will form a major part of the workshop on NTFP/NTNRs to be held in early December, 2002.

Productivity and health information for medicinal plants is recorded and presented in tables and 1:25000 scale maps for each Park Section in each of the Parks. Rila is addressing 6 medicinal plants with commercial value, and Central Balkan, 10. Collection is restricted to two of each Park’s management zones.

Consultant Support

Two consultants were hired and supervised under contract with Central Balkan National Park. BCEG Project resources were used to pay these consultants.

Park Staff Training – In-country

Training was conducted in the application of a methodology for monitoring and assessment of the general and sanitary condition of forests, as well as their reproductive and regenerative potential. Training also included the selection of appropriate transects and sample plots along them for implementation of the methodology.

Park staff trained:

Rila NP	CBNP
8 employees	6 employees
3 park experts	3 park experts
2 park section heads	1 park section head
3 rangers	2 rangers

CRP 5 Rila Monastery Nature Park Management Plan Prepared

Indicators* (life of project)	Target	Actual 4/02
Number of stakeholder workshops	5	5
Number of public awareness events held in support of management planning	3	2
Number of management plans prepared	1	0

Development of the Rila Monastery Nature Park Management Plan continues in an intensive work mode.

The planning process during the reporting period was again noted for its high level of stakeholder engagement, at workshops and field work conducted in the Park. Two other significant events characterize the reporting period:

Planning Activities and Events

Activity	Dates	
5 th management planning workshop – zone planning	<i>July 29-August 1</i>	19 participants
Tourism Zone Planning – field work	<i>10/11 August 17/18 August</i>	CPT
Finalize Management Zone Plan Proposal	<i>27-29 August</i>	CPT
Landscape Assessment Finalized	<i>14 September</i>	Landscape assessment Consultants
Presentation of Management Planning efforts to the Holy synod by Metropolit Gavril	<i>3-5 September</i>	
Presentation to the Holy synod on matters raised by Gavril's presentation	<i>24 September</i>	CPT and key PMU staff
Final Draft of Regimes and Norms	<i>25 October</i>	CPT

4 Core Planning Team meetings were conducted during this reporting period. CPT meetings are used to review draft management plan material, plan and organized workshops and develop each section of the management plan. Management plan sections are based on the products of stakeholder workshop. The next (and final) stakeholder workshop is scheduled for Bansko in early November, 2002.

The Bulgarian Orthodox Church - Work with the Synod and Church Representatives

PMU staff worked extensively with Church representatives to assist in their understanding of management planning concepts and practical applications. More than 16 hours were spent assisting Metropolit Gavril with preparation of his presentation to the Synod in early September. Regular phone contact has been maintained with the Abbot of Rila Monastery, to ensure that he was kept fully informed.

Subsequently, two presentations were made to the Synod (see above).

Management Concept for the Future of Rila Monastery Nature Park

With the blessing of the MOEW and MOAF, the management concept for the Nature Park was moved forward and is being formally considered. These events were in part triggered by the release of a letter from the Bulgarian Orthodox Church Synod in early October. The letter is addressed to the Prime Minister and reflects the Church's desire to take an active role in the future management of its lands within the Park. The Synod's letter represents the first formal engagement of the Church expressing a desired outcome regarding the management plan and its implementation. (See Appendix 2)

The BCEG Project is responsible for drafting a response. The response will be formally authored by the MOEW.

The Management model concept paper has been reviewed in a number of meetings with the MOEW (Mihailov), with MOAF (Plougchieva, Tinchev and Marinkovski), and the Directorate of Ecclesiastical Matters,(Jelev and Krustev). The results of these meetings indicated that there is general consensus regarding the need for a new model for the management and administration of the Nature Park. The BCEG Project was given the mandate to continue development of the new management model must be developed – a new form of management body (a council or board) must be developed and put in place to address stakeholder interests in the Park's future.

Other management models are evolving in Bulgaria, to accommodate private and municipal roles and responsibilities in nature parks. While these are still undeveloped, there are already discussion being held for the future management models for Strandja Nature Park and the Kalimok-Brushlen Nature Park.

A special task force has been formed and organized with BCEG Project support to address this matter. It consists of the MOEW, the MOAF and the Department of Ecclesiastical Matters. The team met for its first meeting on October 22, 2002, to draft a response to the Synod's letter to the Prime Minister, and to consider the management structure and TOR in greater detail.

A revised draft management structure and TOR will be developed by the BCEG Project by the end of November, 2002.

Short Term Technical Assistance

No additional international short term technical assistance was employed during this reporting period.

4 local consultants to work as the Core Planning Team. They are Dr. Dimitar Peev, Dr. Petar Yankov, Ms. Sneshana Kostadinova, and Mr. V. Velichkov. They are assigned to the management plan's development during its entire development. Ms. Kostadinova left for two months of English language training in the United States. She will not return until December.

Result 2 Models for Generating and Capturing Biodiversity Conservation Revenue are Improved

This result is supported by two results packages – **Eco-enterprise, and innovative financial mechanisms.**

The activities selected as part of **eco-enterprise** have been developed using contributions from both national park directorates. These pilot activities support models and are test cases within, and outside, National Parks. Most were determined during management planning for both parks, and with the information collected from three years of socio-economic surveys. We believe that two eco-enterprise themes represent the best opportunity to:

- Maximize the partnerships between National Parks and their local, municipal constituencies;
- Address very real needs as expressed by local community members;
- Directly relate park management objectives that stress nature conservation **and** provide benefits to local communities;
- Generate direct income and support enterprise development in target communities selected with National Parks;
- Coordinate in-service staff development, technical specialization, and project results with the roles of Park Directorates.

The BCEG Project is supporting the development of pilot activities addressing **ecotourism, and non-timber natural resources collection.**

The BCEG Project continued to work with two Bulgarian subject matter specialists during this annual reporting period. They act as intermittent technical advisors to the pilot areas. Both subject matter specialists (one for ecotourism, and one for non-timber natural resources) continue to provide advice and technical direction for the remaining life of the Project.

CRP 3 Park-Related Eco-Enterprises Demonstrated for Ecotourism and Natural, Non-Timber Resources Collection

Indicators for NTFP/NTNR (CRP 3.a)	Target	Actual 4/02
Number of NTFP/NTNR groups formed	2	2
Number of areas managed by co-management agreement	2	2
Number of training events delivered	5	2
Number of park-based regional consultative workshops	2	4
Number of income-generating projects	2	NB
Indicators for Eco-tourism (CRP 3.b)	Target	Actual
Number of eco-tourism forums (initiative groups) developed	2	2
Number of eco-tourism strategies prepared	2	
Number of eco-tourism projects demonstrated	2	

NB Implementation of these tasks resulted in a considerable shift to the Project's small and medium enterprise strategy.

3a. Non-Timber Natural Resources (NTFP/NTNR)

The bilberry (*Vaccinium spp*) collection campaigns were successfully conducted in both Parks. Starting dates for campaigns were observed in both Parks, and this represented the first controlled access for wild resource collection since the Parks were established.

Central Balkan National Park

In 2002 CBNP issued commercial collection permits and collected fees for 77,000 kg of bilberries from the entire national park. This represents an increase in total revenue for commercial bilberry collection from 1,767 kg officially permitted in 2001 to 80,363 kg in 2002. Park revenues increased accordingly. These are remitted to the National Environment Protection Fund.

YEAR	Revenue CBNP
2001	2,650.00 BGL
2002	12,054.45 BGL

The National Park issued 12,696 of 15,000 free coupons representing a potential harvest of 126,960 kg from the Park's Pilot area (each coupon is worth 10 kg). Of these, 11,500 coupons were issued for commercial use, and 1,199 coupons issued for personal use.

77,000 kg of bilberries can be directly linked to coupons with the commercial harvest for Central Balkan National Park pilot area (Klissura Park Section). An additional 3,363 kg were permitted as coming from other/neighboring park sections.

The bilberry resource assessment for the Klissura Park Section was conservatively estimated at 60,000 kg/60 tons. The resource estimate accounts for 78% of the total commercial harvest from the area. No exact amounts are recorded for personal use, but we can assume that personal use plays a role in the annual harvest. If all of the 1,199 personal use coupons issued during the campaign of 2002 resulted in the collection of 10 kg each, we can assume that the annual average yield for 2002 in the pilot area was closer to 72,000 kg. This amount helps us test the veracity of the resource assessment methodology, and encourages us project bilberry harvests during good years of growth, more liberally.

Collectors were supplied with coupons on request. These were periodically monitored and checked during the collection season.

This campaign received excellent cooperation from the private sector. Commercial buyout points responded favorably to the campaign, and played an active role in issuing collection coupons. New coupons were issued with each day's commercial intake, making it easy to track daily collection practices.

Rila National Park

The campaign results for Pilot Area Park Sections Yakoruda and Belitza were dramatically different than Pilot Area-Park Section Klissura in Central Balkan National Park.

The National Park officially issued 1,778 collection coupons. These were all issued for personal use, and represent approximately 17,780 kg of bilberries. Officially, there were only 204 collection coupons issued for commercial use. These were issued at the end of the collection season, and represent a modest 2,040 kilograms of berries.

Park rangers collected back 1,109 control pieces from individual coupons/collectors. 130 (1,300 kg) coupon control pieces were collected at the market place at the Cherna Mesta railway station – a common buy out point in the pilot area. These are the only quantities collected for commercial purposes, but this amount was collected using coupons for personal use.

The total gains in revenue are consequently, also modest. The increase in Rila National Park revenue from bilberries between the season 2001 and 2002 is

YEAR	Revenue RNP
2001	407.00 BGL
2002	783.00 BGL

Commercial collection certificate accompanied by fees paid to the Park include 2,040 kg for the Pilot Park Sections, and 2,600 kg for the neighboring park section, to the east, Belovo.

The estimated potential yield of bilberries from the pilot area was again conservatively, 31 256 kg. 68% of this crop is found at significant distances from communities and buy out centers, and is located in high mountain spruce and dwarf pine communities.

The weather during the collection season in this area was wet. The season however was very good for mushrooms, and their collection was preferred over bilberry collection. Unseasonably wet weather combined with a bumper crop of mushrooms appeared to provide a satisfactory alternative for collectors/buyers and income generation. On a practical level, there was no real commercial collection season for bilberries in these two park sections.

Twenty tons of bilberries were purchased on a commercial basis from the wider Mesta River watershed – but the majority of these had origins in the Rhopdes and Pirin mountains. The collection in the pilot sections of Rila National Park was mainly for personal use.

Observations

The primary commercial buyer of bilberries in Bulgaria started buying from this area late in the season. They also offered prices below what collectors and local buyers were willing to accept. The opinion is generally held that the successful bilberry campaign season from Central Balkan and other sections of the Stara Planina had overwhelmed domestic processing and that they were unable to keep up with supply. After processing the more conventional sources of bilberries, the buyer was late in focusing their attention on Mesta River Watershed. They arrived in the area late and could not offer prices competitive with those being paid for mushrooms in this area.

Of the 17, 78 tons of bilberries collected for personal use – some of them were sold along the road (approximately 2 tons). Approximately another 2 tons were “exchanged” at the markets in towns for other products (bartered). Some quantities were collected “on order” - orders placed for quantities from people in distant villages and towns. Collectors were being sent to collect small quantities of 10 kg (on average) and townspeople were paying for this. This method accounts for another estimated 2 tons. As much as 6-7 tons thus joined the official commercial tons (2040) to account for up to 9 tons that could be interpreted as having commercial use. The balance 8-9 tons were used on personal/household basis. This collection and use pattern represents a much different dynamic than that of Central Balkan National Park.

Finally, park staff report that large quantities of bilberries were left in the “field” and not collected. This suggests the market forces may actually have offered the Rila National Park bilberry resources a respite from collection. This could be important to long-term stock maintenance and resource management.

Role of the Project

The results and lessons learned will be summarized and analyzed in the NTFP/NTNR consultant’s report and two workshops. One workshop will be held in November with the National parks and will have the task to develop management options and recommendations for park-wide application of commercial NTFP/NTNR management. The other will be a National workshop with national stakeholders and will have the objective to suggest policy improvements on the national level.

The Project continues to provide expert technical assistance through an intermittent consultant hired specifically to provide guidance and to support practical activities in the two pilot areas. Chavdar Gusev, NTFP/NTNR specialist, is providing this technical assistance.

Mass Media

Full media coverage and a wide-ranging public awareness campaign was conducted in support of the “bilberries campaign”. The results of the media campaign are provided under separate cover and illustrate a variety of newspaper, radio and TV broadcasts with regional and national coverage. *(Please see the report entitled: Collaborative Management of Non-timber Natural Resources in National Parks –Campaign-2002, from August 2002).*

3.b Ecotourism Pilot Sites

Major Activities and Events in the Pilot Ecotourism Sites

Local Ecotourism Associations:

The Ecotourism Associations for Rila (Samokov) and Central Balkan (Kalofer) joined forces to respond to a grant competition sponsored by USAID/World Learning. The Grant competition is a component of the follow-on to study tours organized through the USAID TRANSIT program. The Ecotourism Associations’ proposal is a follow-up of their study Tour from November 2001. Their proposal was developed cooperatively. Their proposal was successful, and they will receive a total of 10,000 BGL. The proposal is devoted to working with the local communities to generate more support for the activities of the association, increase participation in the ecotourism association’s initiatives, and to orient local entrepreneurs in basic ecotourism services skills.

Each of the Ecotourism Associations in the pilot areas also developed their participated in he competition announced through the National Ecotourism Forum. Each of their proposals were awarded prizes of 2000 leva each (1000 USD). The Samokov - Rila National Park Ecotourism Association is planning the development of a mountain bike trail outside and inside the park along with a national competition as a marketing tool. The Kalofer – Central Balkan National Park Ecotourism Association is planning the establishment of a specialized mountain training center for children.

Public Presentations to Local Communities

During this period the local associations conducted their first public presentations as registered trade associations under the NGO law, distributed new leaflets developed with a grant from the USAID-supported DEMNET program, and attracted the attention of other local businesses. Membership in the Associations rose as a consequence. For example, in Rila these were conducted separately for each settlement (totally 4 meetings) and the result was a new increase of members of the association with 3 new members.

Business Development Planning

The BCEG ecotourism business development consultant, Nikolai Ivanov, worked with the two ecotourism associations to develop their marketing strategies and “destination” business management plans. He visited each of the pilot areas three times during the reporting period. During his second trips, he 6 days in each area. His report and the Associations plans will be finalized in November. Preliminary results from his work with Associations were shared at the National Ecotourism Forum.

Participation in the National Ecotourism Forum

Both pilot area Ecotourism Associations participated in the Forum and Fair of the National Ecotourism Forum in early October. Each Association developed and published its own marketing materials with the financial support of the BCEG project. They also made a joint presentation of their local pilot projects at the session in the conference devoted to the Ecotourism competitive cluster model.

Success/Impact Indicators

Monitoring manuals, in Bulgarian and English, were completed during this reporting period, and released at the Forum. The analysis of the individual Ecotourism Associations’ monitoring efforts will be released as a report in November.

National Marketing Survey

The final report of the Bulgarian marketing survey will be presented in November. An abridged version and the analysis of market trends and target audiences, was presented at the Ecotourism Event in October.

Adventure Trail Development

With BCEG Project support, each Ecotourism Association has examined the possibilities of developing adventure trails in conjunction with their respective national parks. Two trails have been designed within each of the ecotourism pilot areas, and formal proposals developed for EIAs and review by the Park Directorates.

Final proposals will be submitted to the National Environmental Protection Fund for financial support and construction in 2003.

A field trip was made to western Bulgaria for National Park Directors and technical staff to examine an “adventure trail” that was recently constructed. The trip allowed the technical

staff to review the construction materials and technical specifications for developing similar trails in their parks. Safety, construction materials, guidelines for operation and use were examined. Adventure trails are considered a destination attraction, and their future as a concession within parks is being examined.

National Level

National Ecotourism Strategy

The first draft was finished and presented to the National Ecotourism Forum. Using the outputs of the Forum and an intensive workshop with national and international participants on the day following the Event, the strategy will be revised and improved.

Professor Don Hawkins provided 4 days of expert assistance in revising the draft. He incorporated the results of the conference and the workshop in a revised draft presented to the Project at the end of October.

The revised strategy will be reviewed by the national strategy drafting team, completed, and presented in a national meeting in early February, 2003.

National Event

The Project played a lead role in the organization and management of the Ecotourism Event – National Ecotourism Forum – Ecotourism, Mountains and Protected Areas – Partners in Prosperity, October 2-5, Sofia, Bulgaria.

The Event was broadly considered a success. Event statistics, participation, special guests, media coverage and an event program are presented in a separate conference report: The First National Forum – Ecotourism, Mountains and Protected Areas: Partners in Prosperity, October 2-5, Sofia Bulgaria: REPORT.

There were 227 registered participants for the Event, and 49 Exhibitors.

International guests, whose participation at the Ecotourism Event was sponsored by the BCEG Project, are noted within **Appendix 3**.

Protocol for Collaboration between MoEW, MAF and MoE Signed

A Protocol establishing the tenets of inter-ministerial collaboration between the Ministries of Agriculture and Forests, Environment and Waters, and Economy was formally adopted during the conference. A copy of the protocol is attached as **Appendix 4**.

Innovation Awards

12 ecotourism project innovation awards were given at the end of Event to private-public ecotourism initiatives from throughout the country. Awards were presented by the U.S. Ambassador to Bulgaria, the Honorable James Pardew. Innovation award recipients were given 1000 USD to finalize their project concepts as proposals by the end of December, 2002. These projects will be presented to a national seminar on ecotourism that addresses the next draft of the National Ecotourism Strategy, in early February.

Local Sub-contracts issued during this period include:

Ecotourism Event Management – EKS0 Ltd, for **Event Phases II and III** (event materials, and exhibition design and construction; and event management during the Forum).

International STTA

Professor Donald Hawkins, returned to Bulgaria for his 5th trip and his 6th consultancy, between September 29 and October 9. Professor Hawkins was a keynote speaker during the Ecotourism Forum, and a key facilitator in the Draft National Ecotourism Strategy Workshop on October 5, 2002. He provided USAID with a full de-briefing on the success of the national parks ecotourism models on October 9, 2002. He also assisted the Project to present a plan of action and activities needed to finalize a successful national ecotourism strategy.

Role of UD/FLAG

UD/FLAG provided funding support for the Ecotourism Forum session on Ecotourism Investment and Banking – Opportunities and Challenges, as well as moderated the session. Five prominent national, commercial banks were represented. They also provided financial support for the lunch for 150 participants following the session.

In addition, UD/FLAG provided funding support for two of twelve awards (2000 USD/4000 BGL each) for the Innovative Ecotourism Projects.

UNDP, Swiss Development Agency, GTZ, and World Bank

These four three development agencies provided funding support for their project associations and organizations to both attend the Event, and to exhibit at the Fair. This financial contribution to individual projects throughout the country helped to secure wide representation, and to bring together diverse national experiences in ecotourism.

In addition, UNDP provided direct financial subsidy of the Ecotourism Conference session on Ecotourism, Legislation, Regulation, and Institutional Frameworks.

CRP 4 Mechanism for National Park Financial Sustainability Established

Indicators	Target	Actual 4/02
Number of policy constraints addressed (<i>resulting in changes to income generation and long-term park financing</i>)	4	4
Number of innovative financing mechanisms developed and tested	2	4
Number of support workshops organized and facilitated	8	4
Number of mechanisms established	2	0

The Project continued to promote and pursue the following examples of financial mechanisms:

Parks (Endowment) Fund – the Fund was officially designated by the Government of Bulgaria, in a meeting between MOAF, MOEW and the MOE, on October 7, 2002. The GOB has committed, in principle, 12.5 million Bulgarian leva to the Fund over the next five years (2003-2007). The terms of the GOB contribution are reflected in a “protocol” that identifies the basic principles governing the government’s commitment. The protocol is attached as **Appendix 5**. The protocol designating the Fund was immediately reflected in a proposal from the MOAF, the MOEW and the MOE seeking the first international contribution to the Fund from the GEF. This letter, addressed to the World Bank, is attached as **Appendix 6**.

Park Prospectus

A Bulgaria Parks Fund prospectus was developed during this reporting period. It was used for purposes of fundraising and information sharing during August and September, in Bulgaria and the United States. The Prospectus was prepared by the Project’s consultant, Jared Hardner, as part of a domestic review of private donor funding opportunities for the Parks Fund. A copy of a full-color prospectus is attached as **Appendix 7**.

Fundraising

The ARD-BCEG Chief of Party, conducted meetings with the USAID, World Bank and Conservation International during the second week of September. The purpose of the meetings was to:

1. Update the Acting CTO of the BCEG Project, and technical staff of the Biodiversity IQC and RAISE IQC teams on the opportunities and dimensions of a Parks Fund for Bulgaria. These meetings included Gerald Gold, Gregory Myers, Jeff Ploetz, Cynthia Gill, Mary Rowen (both EGAD-BIOFOR IQC), and Chris Kosnik (EGAD-RAISE IQC).
2. Conduct meetings with the Europe and Central Asia Regional Offices of the World Bank to examine the requirements of the GEF for trust funds, and to develop the groundwork for a \$2million funding proposal for the Fund. Meetings included Task Manager for the World Bank Forestry Loan and GEF Projects – Gerhard Dieterle, Emilia Battaglini, Regional GEF Coordinator, Konrad von Ritter, Specialist, and Peter Dewees, GEF Fund specialist for new the Tanzania Trust Fund.
3. Meeting with Marianne Guerrin-McMannus, and Christopher Stone of the Global Conservation Fund to determine the eligibility of Bulgaria for accessing funds for new protected areas from the Moore Foundation supported GCF; and for using a Parks Fund mechanism for administering these funds.

Results

- World Bank

The World Bank meetings and work with national counterparts at the MOAF and MOEW have resulted in the formal incorporation of the \$2million request as part of the Project Concept and Request for GEF-PDF Block B Grant monies to design a 7 million dollar GEF Grant for Biodiversity Conservation in Forest Management. 20,000 USD has been designated in this funding request for TA to further the development of the Parks Fund administrative and management structure, to ensure it meets with GEF requirements.

The BCEG Project will support the same through its STTA, Mr. Jared Hardner, with the remaining 24 days under this Task Order.

- Conservation International

The BCEG Project submitted a concept note for consideration by the GCF. The concept was reviewed positively by the GCF/CI team. However, Bulgaria (although almost indistinguishable from the CI-Biodiversity Mediterranean Hotspot Zone) can not be considered a candidate for funding of new protected areas. The Project is making a case for re-consideration by CI/GCF and is supplying CI with up-dated information regarding biodiversity in Bulgaria. We are also considering approaching the Moore Foundation directly with a funding request for the Bulgarian Parks Fund. An introduction to the GCF/CI is attached as **Appendix 8**.

Park Income Generation and Revenue Collection Tools – Four additional experimental mechanisms have been introduced this year.

Concessions

Results of the Central Balkan National Park, Biala Reka Campsite concession, will be presented in a national conference and workshop on financial mechanisms in December. We expect modifications to the permitting and concession system within national parks. A similar concession model is underway in Rila National Park for the new botanical trail and its management by the Samokov Ecotourism Association.

NTFP/NTNR Collection Permits and Permit System

The NTFP/NTNR collaborative management model, collection coupons and revenue generation experience to date, will be presented in a national seminar on the subject on December 4, 2002. New policy recommendations will be presented, particularly on regulations related to payment systems for resource harvesting.

Grant Writing and Project Fund Raising

The National Parks and their partners have successfully engaged in number of grant writing projects. Most significant among grants and future income generation is the PAN Parks model. Central Balkan National Park will be the first candidate park in Bulgaria, and completed the pre-qualification round for acceptance.

A national seminar on the PAN Parks certification system for investments related to tourism will be hosted by the MOEW on November the 15, in Sofia Bulgaria. Rila also has good prospects of being adopted into the PAN Parks network. A description of the PAN Parks concept is attached as **Appendix 9**.

Public-Private Partnerships

Three public private partnerships are developing with Central Balkan National Parks, The first involves the Park and the Ecotourism Association of Kalofer. They are jointly operating a new tourism and visitor information center in Kalofer Municipality. The facility has been donated by the municipality to the Park, and the partnership between park and private sector association will provide for-profit services and goods associated with Park information and tourist itineraries.

The second involves an overture by the National Park, with the MOEW, seeking private sponsorship for reproduction and distribution of an excellent mobile exhibition on the fauna of the Stara Planina. The Minister of the MOEW is seeking an endorsement of the poster series from the MOE, and jointly they will seek private sector sponsorship of the series to schools throughout Bulgaria.

The third partnership involves a partnership with Borrowed Nature for the production, marketing, and distribution of promotional post-card series.

There are no comparable private-public partnership projects in Rila National Park

Result 3 **Greater Public Awareness and Participation is Demonstrated in Protected Area Management**

This result reflects an over-arching theme in the BCEG Project. Public information and awareness are key components of both national and park-focused efforts. For our purposes, we report on public awareness activities of a national scale, and activities on a park level.

CRP 6 **Public Awareness and Promotion Campaigns Implemented**

National Public Awareness Campaign	Target	Actual 2000-2001	Actual 2001-2002
Number of public awareness strategies developed	1		
National level		1	1
Park level		2	2
Rila Monastery Nature Park ***		1	1
Number of targeted public awareness events and materials			
✓ Targeted public awareness events	20	9*	
National level			
Park level			
Nature Park			
✓ Public awareness material sets	5	4**	
CHM realized through technical assistance, needs assessment and mechanism design package (added to project indicators)	1	1	1

- * targeted public awareness events includes those events related to public hearings for management plans
- ** public awareness material sets includes those materials developed and used in support of public hearings for management plans.
- *** indicates that a separate plan, activities, and plan are conducted in favor of Rila Monastery Nature Park management planning activities.

Our National Public Awareness campaign is characterized by two major phases:

Phase 1 – May 2000- April 2001 – generate increased public information on biodiversity conservation legislation, and the finalization of the Republic's first national park management plans. The major publication – GREEN GOLD of Bulgaria is launched in major national and regional public campaigns.

Phase 2 – May 2001 – September 2002, is designed to support Management Plan implementation after their passage by the Council of Ministers. It will have a particular emphasis on Bulgaria's newly elected parliament after June 2001, the private sector, and Bulgaria's role as a leader in European biodiversity conservation efforts

6.1 Work with the “Green Media Machine”

Journalist Tour to Klissura Park Section, Central Balkan National Park – August 2, 2002

The BCEG Project organized a one-day tour to this NTFP/NTNR pilot area for journalists from the national media. The focus of the tour was the bilberry collection campaign and the new collection system experimented this year.

All journalists who cover environment issues in the central media were invited. The following journalists took part in the tour:

<i>N</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Publication/Radio</i>
1.	Antoaneta Nenkova	Deutsche Welle German National Radio
2.	Radi Biliarska	Horizon Program of the BNR
3.	Tania Kirkova	Novinar Daily
4.	Liulin Stamenov	Photographer for Novinar Daily
5.	Margarita Dimitrova	Zemia Daily
6.	Petar Krastev	Photographer for Zemia Daily
7.	Velin Javorski	Bulgarian Army Daily
8.	Mara Georgieva	Capital Weekly
9.	Juliana Dimitrova	Cash Weekly
10.	Vera Dacheva	Newspaper for the Woman Weekly

Participants from the BCEG Project:

Svetlana Aladjem, Environmental Education and Communication Specialist
Chavdar Gushev, short-term NTFP/NTNR Advisor

Participants from the Central Balkan National Park Directorate:

Nela Rachevitz, Director
Marin Kostov, Klissura Park Section Head

The tour provoked a series of radio broadcasts and newspaper articles. A list of them follows, indicating the newspaper circulation and the Radio Station audience.

Time and Date	Radio Broadcast/Article	Duration/Size	Circulation/Audience
26 July	Woman's World	30 lines	4,000
2 August 5:46 p.m.	Report in the evening political magazine show of Horizon program of the BNR	3 min.	The country's largest
6 August	Novinar Daily	45 lines, 2 photos	20,000
6 August	Zemia Daily	Page, 3 photos	18,000
9 August	Cash Weekly	Page, 2 photos	12,000
13 August 4:00 p.m.	Report + interview of Nela Rachevitz in the afternoons program for Bulgarian listeners of Deutsche Welle German National Radio	6 min.	International
15 August	Bulgarian Army newspaper	Page, 3 photos	11,000

Time and Date	Radio Broadcast/Article	Duration/Size	Circulation/Audience
15-21 August	Newspaper for the Woman Weekly	Page, 5 photos	80,000 (the 2nd largest weekly)
16 August	Woman's World	75 lines, 1 photo	4,000
23 August	Capital Weekly	Page, 2 photos	25,000

Note: As a result of the same campaign, a 1:30 min. report was broadcast by Bulgarian TV – Nova Televizia - at 10 p.m. on August 12. The broadcast addressed the bilberry collection campaign in Yakoruda Park Section of Rila National Park. bTV has the largest audience in country.

A Campaign and Media Coverage Report was produced and sent to all BCEG Project partners.

Provoked Articles and Broadcasts

A. The BCEG Communication Specialist continues to work with ***the Sofia based correspondent of Deutsche Welle (DW)*** German National Radio Antoaneta Nenkov according to the reached agreement for production of radio features. In August - September period three interviews (Marin Kostov, Nela Rachevitz, and Dimitar Peev) were produced and broadcast by DW. The interviews were included in the “This is Bulgaria” special program of DW that presents the life of the country through personalities. 6 features have been produced to date and featured on national and international broadcasts of the German International Radio.

- Report presenting the multi-media CD of Bulgarian National Park.
- Report about the national parks' billberries campaign, including an interview with Nela Rachevitz, Director of Central Balkan National Park
- Interview with Marin Kostov – Central Balkan National Park – Park Section Head, presenting the life and work of a Park section head and his role in the bilberries campaign
- Interview with Dr. Lilly Vladova. BCEG environmental education consultant, and head of primary teacher training, presenting the environmental education activities of the Parks
- Report from the Ecotourism Forum including interviews with Donald Hawkins/GWU, Gabor Verecny/WTO, and Peter Hetz, BCEG Project.
- Report from the opening of the botanical trail including interview with D. Peev, Associate Director of the Institute of Botany, Project consultant, and trail designer.

B. **Ecotourism.** A 20 minutes report addressing the work of the Kalofer Ecotourism Association in the “Eco Bell”, a specialized environment program of ***7-Days TV, was produced***. It was aired for the first time on 7 September and than repeated twice - on 14 September and on 19 October The report was provoked by BCEG Project and produced with the support of the CBNP Section Head, and the Chairman of the Ecotourism Association. The TV crew spent a day in Kalofer and taped interviews with members of the Association, craftsmen, and the Park's staff.

6.2 Multimedia CD of the Bulgarian National Parks

45 CDs with cover letters were sent to the World Summit in Johannesburg. The CDs were distributed by Minister Arsenova to ministers of environment and other participants of the Summit.

6.3 TV Quality Broadcast Version of the Bulgarian National Parks CD

The Satellite Channel of the National TV aired the TV film on 3rd and on 4th of September. The Satellite Channel of Bulgarian National TV is transmitted by EUTELSAT and covers all Europe, Ukraine, Russia, Middle East, and North Africa. It was transmitted to America by some private TV companies.

The First Channel of Bulgarian National TV aired the ½ hour film on 24 September. The TV debut of the film was widely advertised through Central Mass Media channels. These included:

- Notes about the film were published in the regular TV Program Supplement of 24 HOURS and TRUD dailies. These were released on Saturday 21 September. Saturdays issues of the two dailies have a total circulation of 700 000.
- The Bulgarian Telegraph Agency announced the debut to all 200 subscribers.
- The Horizon Channel of the Bulgarian National Radio (as part of its Morning Show) broadcast an announcement about the TV debut on 24 September.

6.4 Media Coverage of the National Ecotourism Event

The BCEG Project Communication Specialist, in coordination with the Press Offices of the three partnering ministries, conducted the Central Media Campaign of the National Ecotourism Forum. As it is a part of the Project's public awareness work, all BCEG resources and established relations with the "Green Media Machine" were successfully used.

The Campaign comprised the following *steps and activities*:

- *Press Conference* - 25 September, held at the Bulgarian Telegraph Agency Press Club. Invitations and Press Releases were sent to all 200 media subscribers of the Agency in country and abroad. The Press release was designed to inform news agencies about the developments in the organization of the Forum and present the Press Center organized in support of the Forum workings. 20 journalists from Central Media participated.

50 Invitations to the Forum were also sent to Chief Editors of the Central Media, and all foreign correspondents. Invitations were accompanied by copies of the National Parks Pilot Areas- Ecotourism Model.
- *Provoked articles and broadcasts*. Interviews were arranged for the Deputy Ministers of Environment and Waters, Economy and Agriculture and Forests with national radio and TV media. These were coordinated through the Ministries' press offices. Provoked articles and TV and Radio broadcasts that present participants of the Conference, experts, Key Note Speakers, Award Winners were organized in the period 20 August - 7 October.

- *Regular E-mailing of information* - Announcements, Press Releases, invitations, the Forum Program and Short CVs of the keynote speakers, web-site updates, etc. were sent electronically on a daily basis to 79 journalists from Central Media in the period 25 September - 5 October.
- *Publishing information on web sites.* Information about the Forum was being published regularly on the most popular Bulgarian news web sites: novinite.com (in English) and the BTA site from 23 September to 7 October.
- *Press Center at the Ecotourism Forum.* The Press Center of the Forum worked from 2 to 5 October at the Radisson Hotel providing journalists with information, materials and support in organizing meetings, interviews and production of articles and broadcasts. It served 55 accredited journalists from 20 central media, 12 newspapers and magazines specialized in tourism and business and 2 correspondents of foreign media.
- The work of the Press Center started with a specially organized briefing and orientation with the Conference's Keynote Speakers on 2 October. 16 journalists, 2 TV crews and 5 photo reporters took part. The meeting resulted in more than 15 interviews.

The Press Center organized the coverage of the two official Forum ceremonies:

- The opening ceremony of the Forum where 4 TV crews, 11 photo reporters and 9 reporters worked
- The Awards ceremony where 3 TV crews, 9 photo reporters and 6 journalists participated

A special tour was organized for the accredited journalists to the site of the First Bulgarian Botanical Trail. The opening ceremony of the trail took place on 5 October. 13 journalists from central and regional media took part.

The Campaign resulted in more than two hours of aired TV broadcasts, two and half-hours radio broadcasts and over 60 published newspaper and magazine articles. Without exception, all central media covered the event. All of the registered broadcasts and articles are positive and supportive of the Forum's purpose and messages. A large percentage mentions the efforts, activities, and sponsorship of USAID.

- Ecotourism Conference Media Report - containing a summary of the press coverage and public information campaign around the Forum has been produced and circulated under separate cover.
- A CD was produced and holds the records of all TV broadcasts provoked by the BCEG Communication Specialist in support of the Forum

6.5 Press Monitoring Reports

Two regular monthly reports and two special reports for: (1) the NTFP/Billberries Campaign and (2) the Ecotourism Forum Report were produced during this period and submitted to the Donor and the partnering organizations

6.6 Web Site of the National Parks

The work on a web site of the Bulgarian National Parks started at the end of September. Maria Ivanova has been appointed as a web development consultant.

First meeting of the Working group was held on 11 October. Rila and Central Balkan NPD representatives, the BCEG Communication Specialist, the web consultant and the MOEW expert Nely Ilieva, who is supervising the web site of the ministry, form the group.

The objectives of the meeting were to describe the users of the web site, the information availability and it's preparation for publishing and to set a mechanism of coordination between the MOEW, parks and BCEG PMU.

- NP web site target groups and what information we want to share with them
- Structure; Format and stile of the texts; Images
- Maintenance and updating
- MOEW's web site and the coordination/link with it

As a result of the meeting the Working Group agreed on a schedule for preparation of the information and the images. The BCEG Project undertook to prepare "Requirements for the producer and a list of Companies to be invited for tender- TOR". Rila and Central Balkan NP Directors are preparing a letter to Minister Arssenova asking for the assurances for the financial maintenance of the site and approval of the structure, content and mechanism of updating.

The Web site design will be commercially produced under a competitive procurement process. The first version of the Parks' sites is expected in January.

4.0 Project Management and Administration

4.1 Project Coordination and Supervision

Project coordination and work review meeting was conducted with the Project's Coordination Group, in light of a no-cost extension awarded to the Project in October.

Mr. Gerald Gold was appointed acting CTO during this reporting period. He replaces temporarily, Ms. Alicia Grimes, Project CTO.

Mr. Gregory Myers, USAID E&E/EEST/ENR, visited the Project at the end of September, and attended the National Ecotourism Event.

Mr. Jay Lee continues to provide regular links between the Project and the USAID-Bulgaria Mission. Mr. Lee announced his departure from USAID-Bulgaria in December.

The Project was awarded Modification #3 – a no-cost extension of the BCEG Project work until March 31, 2003.

Mr. Ed Harvey continued as Project Manager in ARD's Home Office.

N.B. Three important event involving important U.S. Government representatives were conducted by the Project:

1. August 6, 2002 Introduction to the Rila Monastery Nature Park and the Management Planning efforts supported by USAID for Dr. Kent Hill, Assistant USAID Administrator for Eastern Europe and Central Asia
2. October 19, 2002 US Ambassador day trip to the new Botanical Trail of Rila National Park, and an introduction to the Samokov Ecotourism Association, with Jay Lee.
3. October 22, 2002 briefing provided to the U.S. Ambassador regarding the Rila Monastery Nature Park and Management Planning Effort to date.; with Mission Director Debra McFarland and Jay Lee.

4.2 Project Staffing

No changes to Project national staff are noted.

The Project's Senior Team Leader changed his Sofia residence with the departure of his family back to the United States. His move to an apartment in Sofia is a monthly cost savings for the Project.

The Senior Team Leader conducted a short fund-raising trip to the United States between September 9-13.

He was granted permission for emergency travel with the death of his father. He returned to the United States between 14 and 19, October.

4.3 Office

Office rent agreement was extended until the end of March 2003.

4.4 International Technical Assistance

Professor Donald Hawkins, SOW #6 - Ecotourism Specialist. Dr. Hawkins completed his 6th assignment to Bulgaria between September 29 and October 9. This completes the number of days under this Functional Labor Category.

Mr. Jared Hardner - no travel. Mr. Hardner completed a 7 day SOW during this reporting period. His report of activities conducted in support of fund-raising is attached as **Appendix 10**.

4.5 National Technical Assistance

Two new national (CCN) consulting contracts were used during this reporting period:

Bojidar Ivanov – Bird Specialist – Eco-monitoring	8 days
Vladimir Stefanov – Souslik Specialist – Eco-monitoring	8 days

Intermittent consultants continued to be active for:

- Ecotourism- N. Georgieva, and P. Vluchev
- NTFP/NTNR – C. Gusev
- Rila Monastery Nature Park Management Plan – V. Velichkov, S. Kostadinova, D. Peev, and P. Yankov.

4.6 Purchase Orders

The following local sub-contracts were issued during this reporting period:

- a) Three (3) Purchase Orders in favor of EKS0 for Ecotourism Event Preparation, Design, and Event Management
- b) Producing Center Ltd – for Secondary and Tertiary Tourist Management trails signage in Rila National Park
- c) Hristina Stefka Gencheva, Ltd. – for The Installation of Signboard infrastructure at Central Balkan National Parks and Reserves;
- d) ALD-“Garden”Ltd. Forest Monitoring – Methodology and Training
- e) “Kentur”-Raicho Gunchev, Ltd. Brown bear Monitoring – Methodology and Training

4.7 International Training and Workshop Events

See CRP 3 National Ecotourism Forum – Ecotourism, Mountains and Protected Areas – Partners in Prosperity, Sofia Bulgaria, October 2-5, 2002.

4.8 International Travel

As per **Appendix 3**.

4.9 Networking and Partnerships

Active networking and partnerships were maintained by the Project with:

- World Learning – Ecotourism-Study Tour Grant Awards
- GTZ – Ecotourism Forum
- SDC-BSBCP – Ecotourism Forum
- World Bank-Wetlands Restoration and Nutrient Reduction Project – Ecotourism Forum
- UD/FLAG – Ecotourism Forum
- UNDP – Ecotourism Forum

Appendix 1

Capital Investment Projects Bulgarian National Parks

Status Report

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROJECTS

BULGARIAN NATIONAL PARKS

2001-2002

Rila National Park - 2001

Park	Project	Proposed Budget	Actual Budget
Rila NP 01	Tourist Picnic Areas	13,000 BGL	13,450 BGL
Description/Comments: 25 picnic areas were planned, with 18 sets of picnic furniture produced; and four sets installed in the area of Beli Iskar. The remaining installation will be completed in the spring of 2002. July 02 Construction and installation is complete. Tables 50 Benches 100 Fireplaces 10			
Rila NP 02	Park Entrance Points	50,000 BGL	49,200 BGL
Description/Comments: 8 main entrances were planned and 8 produced, with one installed at the Maliovitsa trail head. 30 secondary park entrances – all produced and ready for installation, and 35 tertiary entrance signs. July 02 Signboard production will be complete at the end of August. Final installation will be done by mid-September. Installation Complete			
Rila NP 03	Visitor Management Signage	16,000 BGL	0 BGL
Description/Comments: Visitor management signs refer to the signboards used to explain park rules and regulations. The NNPS and Parks are presently working together to agree a set of icons/images that will be used throughout the national parks system, and become a standard for park/visitor management signage. Both Park Directors have worked together to design and agree a set of park standard signs/emblems for use throughout the Park system. The designs were formally submitted to the Minister of Environment and Waters for approval. An order should be issued, authorizing use of the signs as standard throughout the Park system. No expenditure was made on this activity during the Park's work year 2001, and the activity will be carried over to the new year (2002). DELETED and COMBINED UNDER PROJECT 16			

Park	Project	Proposed Budget	Actual Budget
Rila NP 06	Interpretation and Education Facilities	16,000 BGL	16,000 BGL
<p>Description/Comments:</p> <p>These sites/facilities are being designed in conjunction with the Ecotourism Initiative Group of Samokov, in the northern section of Rila National Park. The project has been designed into a Botanical interpretation trail in Govedartzi Park section. The project includes trail development , selection of interpretation points, development of interpretation texts, design and production of a leaflet (field guide) and field interpretation infrastructure, training of guides and park staff, design and construction of “Park as a Classroom” infrastructure, promotion of the trail and contracting out to a local business for its management and maintenance.</p> <p>All the design work is finished, texts are developed, the production will be accomplished in August and September and the official opening is planned for October, during the Ecotourism event.</p> <p>October 2002 – Project COMPLETE</p> <p>The project was designed as botanical interpretation trail in Govedartzi Park section. Project activities include “expeditions” for the identification of interpretation points, development of interpretation texts, design and production of a leaflet and field interpretation infrastructure, training of guides and park staff, design and construction of “Park as a Classroom” outdoor infrastructure, promotion of the trail. Park will contract the management and maintenance of the trail to the Ecotourism Association.</p> <p>The opening occurred on 5 October in the presence of the National Ecotourism Forum participants and national media. The Deputy Minister of Environment and Water Fatme Iliaz opened officially the trail. Two newspapers articles were published and three TV broadcasts were devoted to the opening.</p> <p>The trail is devoted to the memory of the first Rila National Park director Mimi Pramatarova.</p> <p>Trail infrastructure includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park entrance board – 1 Trail view points boards – 9 Shelters – 2 Bridges – 2 Park as a Classroom furniture, including 4 tables, 8 benches, 2 flipcharts boards <p>Materials produced – 2000 botanical trail leaflets, Interpreters’ guidebook - 20 copies and Interpreters botanical album – 20 copies.</p> <p>The finalization of the project includes contract with local guides company for the maintenance and services, and training for their guides and the parks staff. This will happen in November 2002.</p>			

Park	Project	Proposed Budget	Actual Budget
Rila NP 07	Conservation Education Materials	3,000 BGL	4,900 BGL
<p>Description/Comments:</p> <p>A set of 10 lessons plans specific to Rila National Park complement the conservation education curriculum materials produced under the GEF Project. Completed under the title, Rila-Known and Unknown. This activity was completed successfully. A series of 3 public launch activities was conducted in support of Rila National Park's 10 Anniversary.</p> <p>Activity Complete</p>			
Rila NP 10	Visitor Information and Safety Materials	4,700 BGL	7,000 BGL
<p>Description/Comments:</p> <p>The Directorate has completed production of all leaflets. There are nine in the series: (1) fire prevention, (2) tourist safety, (3) solid waste, (4) fishing, and (5) park zoning which is addressed by 5 leaflets. 1000 leaflets have been produced in favor of each theme. Distribution has been accomplished through the Park Visitor Center in Panichishte, as well as through each of the Park Sections, which have distributed them to chalets, rest houses and local hotels.</p> <p>Activity Complete</p>			
Rila NP 14	Management Zone Maps - Digitization	500 BGL	459.65 BGL
<p>Description/Comments:</p> <p>Costs were paid to the Park for expert supervision of the digitization of management zone boundaries for the National Park to be added to the Park's GIS.</p> <p>Activity Complete</p>			

Rila National Park – New Projects 2002

Park	Project	Proposed Budget	Actual Budget
RNP 2002 14	Medicinal Plants Management Plan	10,000 BGL	
Description/Comments: Each National Park is required to produce a medicinal plants technical management plan according to the Law. Rila NP will use this amount to develop the Terms of Reference for a comprehensive park-wide medicinal plants technical management plan to be conducted under the supervision of appropriate technicians from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. BAS scientists identified and contracted by National Parks to start field work. See activity description under Medicinal Plants Section in main body of report.			
RNP 2002 15	Park Brochure	7,500 BGL	
Description/Comments: Rila National Park Directorate will produce new park brochures in at least two languages. The Concept and text preparation was initiated this Quarter			
RNP 2002 16	Tourism Infrastructure and Signage	68,000 BGL	
Description/Comments: The Directorate will use the most significant amount of BCEG Project funds allocated to this CRP for finishing off its park-wide tourism infrastructure and signage. This project consolidates outstanding signage from the previous year, and increases the number of sign locations. All the designs are finalized and the purchase order for the production of the graphic elements (signboards) was issued. The wooden infrastructure will be sub-contracted according to USAID and National Park procurement standards. This project is expected to be complete by mid-end October 2002. October 2002 – the following was designed and produced this quarter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 98 information boards with zone maps and park rules 13 information boards for Park sections, and for control and information check points; 30 information boards for Park chalets; 600 information boards identifying regimes and norms relative to park management zones; Outstanding activities: 40 information boards for villages and settlements around the Park; 3 directional signs in support of the new botanical trail; 1000 leaflets in English for the botanical trail.			

Park	Project	Proposed Budget	Actual Budget
RNP 2002 18	Waste Management	12,000 BGL	
<p>Description/Comments:</p> <p>This program will consist of studies/designs and campaign for waste management in the park. Primary focus will be given to a campaign of carry –in carry-out, and designs developed for implementing improvements to solid waste and waste water from chalets. This Project is being designed and executed in conjunction with Central Balkan National Park, the MOEW water and waste management departments, and will be sub-contracted to the National Trust EcoFund technical experts. This is a feasibility and design project, resulting in a set of priority geographic sites, and national standards for waste treatment in protected areas.</p> <p>The NTEF is expected to fund the implementation of the project resulting from this feasibility study and design for both Parks.</p> <p>October 2002 – NTEF was awarded a local contract during this Quarter. Field work and information collection was completed. Chalet assessments for both parks are largely complete with the assistance of park staff. Waste management checklists and ranking criteria have been developed. Design and build proposals are expected at the end o November, as well as guidelines for waste management to be adopted by the National Parks systems.</p>			
RNP 2002 19	Professional Services to Regional Ecotourism Fundraising	\$800	\$780
<p>Description/Comments:</p> <p>Supervision, facilitation and translation costs were carried by the Project in support of a Bulgarian initiated, regional environmental education and ecotourism development project.</p> <p>This project is complete.</p>			

Central Balkan National Park - 2001

Park	Project	Proposed Budget	Actual Budget
CBNP 04	Visitor Infrastructure - Kalofer	13,600 BGL	16,869 BGL
<p>Description/Comments:</p> <p>Local purchase order with a contractor from Kalofer includes the production of 36 benches, 17 tables, 28 chairs, seven fire places, two pit latrines, 2 children's playgrounds, 3 water tap restorations. All elements were produced in a timely fashion and installed in preparation for the 10th anniversary celebrations. Graphic elements/signage is outstanding due to technical problems.</p> <p>Project completed successfully.</p> <p>Phase 2 consists of a commercial management contract. See main body text for description under CRP 4, Bila Reka Campsite Management Concession..</p>			
CBNP 08	Archaeological Inventory	3,000 BGL	2,850 BGL
<p>Description/Comments:</p> <p>The archaeological inventory required under instruction of the Council of Ministers was successfully completed during the August period. An extensive report was completed with both the geographic locations of the inventory, as well as their significance. Both form the basis of a selective interpretive program for the National Park in the future.</p> <p>A final report has been provided, with copies sent to the Ministry of Culture, as well as the MOEW/NNPS. The Report serves as part of the Parks interpretive and signage activities.</p> <p>This activity is complete.</p>			
CBNP 11	Portable Fauna Exhibit	2,200 BGL	2,780 BGL
<p>Description/Comments:</p> <p>A subcontractor will finalize production of 6 (two sided) billboards presenting the fauna of CBNP and a leaflet representing the traveling exposition. The materials focus on primary and early -secondary levels. The exhibition will be used as a tool for realization of the nature conservation education program in the schools around the Park (about 100) and in the visitors centers of Karlovo and Ribaritsa. Completion of the project is expected in the next quarter.</p> <p>July 2002 - Test and design of the portable exhibit have been approved by the Park Directorate and the Ministry of Education.</p> <p>October 2002 – Mobile exhibit presented at the opening of Kalofer Information Center. This is an excellent set of information and graphic posters. The MOEW and MOE are interested in reproducing this poster set of nation-wide distribution. Commercial sponsors are being sought.</p>			

Park	Project	Proposed Budget	Actual Budget
CBNP 12	Post Card Set	4,000 BGL	4,000 BGL
<p>Description/Comments:</p> <p>A subcontractor will produce 1000 sets of post cards which will be distributed through the Park visitors' centers. 12 quality images of the Central Balkan National Park will be selected through a nationally announced competition for amateur and professional photographers. The NPD will have the rights to use them for future information and education materials production. Five people from the Park staff will be trained in taking photos. A Group of professional photographers will be identified as Park Directorate partners.</p> <p>To date, the competition for photos and pre-selection of winners were completed. Final winners will be selected in the next quarter and photos reproduced as postcards for promotion and publicity purposes. The Project is implemented by the National Park in conjunction with Borrowed Nature – an environmental NGO noted for is graphic and multi-media talents.</p> <p>This is one of two sales' tools (the other is a calendar) that Central Balkan National Park is using to generate revenue from park-related promotion and publicity tools. Sales are conducted by commissioned agents of the Park, and the proceeds generated are returned to a revolving fund within the National Environment Protection Fund for similar sales items. This is one of the new Park financial mechanisms in practice.</p> <p>Delivery of the post cards is complete; the Park is finalizing a contracting mechanism for sale of the post cards.</p> <p>October 2002 – This activity is complete. A consignment mechanism for sales of the postcards between the National Park and its information centers is being used to generate sales.</p>			
CBNP 16	Reserve Boundary Demarcation	7,000 BGL	8,700 BGL
<p>Description/Comments:</p> <p>Materials for reserve boundary demarcation were provided under this Project. National Parks supplied labor and transport. Boundary marking was completed during the summer months for the National Park's Reserve system. Only materials were provided. The Park and its partners supplied the labor. To date, 99.5 km of reserve boundaries have been marked. Another 152.5 km of reserve boundaries will be marked in the summer season of 2002. The activity is almost complete.</p> <p>Final markings will take place in June 2002.</p> <p>This activity is complete.</p>			

Park	Project	Proposed Budget	Actual Budget
CBNP 17	CBNP HQ Internet Connection	USD 990.00	USD 990.00
<p>Description/Comments:</p> <p>This project was added to the Park's project list. Significant investigations have been conducted to assure CBNP of a dependable, dedicated internet connection. This will be afforded through a radio modem. Procurement will proceed upon receipt of approval for equipment purchase.</p> <p>The equipment was purchased and installed. CBNP is now part of the "<i>information highway</i>", and regularly uses its internet access to communicate with partners both inside and outside Bulgaria.</p> <p>This activity is successfully completed.</p>			
CBNP 19	Management Zone Digitization	1,000 BGL	1,309.54 BGL
<p>Description/Comments:</p> <p>Costs were paid to the Park for expert supervision of the digitization of management zone boundaries for the National Park to be added to the Park's GIS. This activity was completed during this period and copies presented to the Park Directorate and MOEW. Costs were higher than those for Rila because of the complex set of overlapping geo-reference coordinate sheets used in this Park.</p> <p>This activity is complete.</p>			

Central Balkan National Park - New Projects 2002

Park	Project	Proposed Budget	Actual Budget
CBNP 19	Medicinal Plants	10,000 BGL	
<p>Description/Comments:</p> <p>Each National Park is required to produce a medicinal plants technical management plan according to the Law. Central Balkan National Park will use this amount to develop the Terms of Reference for a comprehensive park-wide medicinal plants technical management plan to be conducted under the supervision of appropriate technicians from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Preliminary field exercises for medicinal plants in the multi-functional zones of the park will be conducted as a matter of priority.</p> <p>July 2002 - Underway, with information being collected from all park sections as the basis for mapping critical areas of local and commercial resource collection.</p> <p>October 2002 – please see body text under CRP 2 for latest information.</p>			

Park	Project	Proposed Budget	Actual Budget
CBNP 20	Tourism Management and Information Infrastructure	89,100 BGL	
<p>Description/Comments:</p> <p>This Project will consolidate all the outstanding activities of 2001, and to them add the development of new infrastructure for all main park entrance, secondary entrances, view points, rest areas, etc. Separate purchase orders will be used to contract construction services from municipalities to the north and south of the Park.</p> <p>July 2002 - Three sub-contracts have been issued in favor of tourist information infrastructure in the Park. One is for the design and production of the signboards for all sites; One if for the pre-fabrication of all wooden elements that will assembled and erected on sites; The third is for the assembly and installation of the infrastructure on sites.</p> <p>This approach is taken with preference for local fabrication and installation of all tourist information infrastructure in the Parks, and favors local sub-contractors. Sub-contractors are identified and selected based on competitive tender process, organized by the National Park Directorate, to USAID and MOEW standards.</p> <p>October 2002 – Tourist information infrastructure has been designed and installed at 26 places in the Park. A total of 123 tourist information signboards have been mounted.</p> <p>Balance of activities – Production of graphics and signs for 119 signboards destined for the settlements and villages around the Park. Production of 12 arches bearing the Central Balkan National Park name, to be produced and installed above major entrance points.</p>			
CBNP 21	Web Site Design and Development	5,000 BGL	
<p>Description/Comments:</p> <p>Central Balkan will be first national park to develop and maintain a web site in two languages. The website will be hotlinked to other websites in Sofia, and managed and maintained through a commercial service.</p> <p>July 2002 - No Progress, as the coordinator remains on sick leave. The design if the website will be developed and managed by the BCEG Project – PMU, as part of its work with the MOEW.</p> <p>October 2002 - Four stages of the website design have been completed during this reporting period: 1) formation of working group including Parks and MOEW staff; 2) development of web site framework with working group; 3) identification consultant; 4) proposal for local, competitive procurement of web site designer;</p>			

Park	Project	Proposed Budget	Actual Budget
CBNP 22	Cherni Ossam Tourism Catalog and CD	4,000 BGL	
<p>Description/Comments:</p> <p>This is the final set of tourism inventory materials to be produced in favor of municipalities surrounding Central Balkan National Park. Design and production of a catalog and CD is part of the Parks partnership with the Troyan municipality, and ecotourism development on the north side of the Park.</p> <p>October 2002 - Activity incomplete. Finalization of catalog and its printing will be completed in November.</p>			

Appendix 2

**Correspondence between
the Bulgarian Orthodox Church Synod
and the Bulgarian Government
regarding the Rila Monastery Nature Park management**

Bulgarian Patriarchy
The Holly Synod

To:

7/10/02

Mr. Simeon Saxe Koburg-Gotha
Prime Minister of Republic of Bulgaria

Mr. Nikolay Vasilev
Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers
and a Minister of Economy

Mrs. Dolores Arsenova
Minister of MOEW

Mr. Ivan Jelev
Director
Ecclesiastic Matters Directorate
Council of Ministers

ARD – Bulgaria
Working on the Rila Monastery Nature Park
Management plan development

Dear Mr. Prime Minister

According to a decision of the Holly Synod - Protocol № 36 from 02 October 2002, we are addressing you and referring to the process of Rila Monastery Nature Park Management plan's development.

The Management plan development concerns directly the activities and the interests of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and in particular the Rila Monastery, whose lands represent the majority of the Rila Monastery Nature Park territory.

The process of Rila Monastery Nature Park Management plan development coincides with the process of restitution of the Rila Monastery lands. Still these properties are not fully restituted. A priority for the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and the Rila Monastery is their full reinstatement.

The Bulgarian Orthodox Church recognizes the importance of all matters linked with the conservation of this protected area – The Nature Park, as well as the necessity of rapid development and adaptation of all activities described within the realm of the ecology of the country and with the European and World standards.

As we express our understanding of these processes, we use the opportunity to notice the historical contribution of the Rila Monastery for the creation and protection of the territory in its current condition, for ages.

Due to the fact that our priority is the restitution of lands of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and the Rila Monastery, we propose, according to the possibilities given in the active legislation, that the process of the Management plan development be temporarily stopped until the full reinstatement of the property of the Rila Monastery is completed; or if this is not possible, the time period for the Plan's development to be extended until the completion of the restitution process.

Categorically, we underline the necessity and the readiness of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church to undertake the management Rila Monastery Nature Park and the implementation of its management plan. We express our willingness in a future moment to review and in detail discuss and develop, according the current legislation, the ways and forms for this management.

N.B. The italics and bold face are those of the BCEG Project; and represent the first public declaration of the Church's desire to manage the territory and to implement its plan)

The activities in the field of ecology and the protected areas management plans development, in particular after 1999, are supported and elaborated according to a Normative act signed between the Governments of Republic of Bulgaria and the USA. We kindly request you, when it is possible, to receive a copy of the mentioned Normative act.

N.B. (This last paragraph is convoluted and confusing. They refer to both the Protected Areas Act and the Management planning regulation, as well as the MOU between the US and the Republic of Bulgaria.) BCEG Project

With respect:

The Chairman of the Holy Synod
Patriarch Maxim, Patriarch of Bulgaria

DRAFT LETTER OF RESPONSE FROM MOEW TO SYNOD
Letter has been sent, and content agreed.

His Holiness Maxim
Patriarch of Bulgaria,
Chairman of the Holy Synod of
the Bulgarian Orthodox Church

Your Holiness,

Please be advised that, in order to prepare a reply to your letter dated October 7th, the Religious Affairs Directorate of the Council of Ministers (CM), the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests (MOAF) and the Ministry of the Environment and Waters (MOEW) have since held two working meetings. The representatives of the three above said Government institutions hereby state with the utmost responsibility that the procedure of restitution of title of forests and lands within the Forest Estate belonging to the Holy Monastery of Rila is complete and the development of a management Plan for Rila Monastery Nature Park does not in any way interfere with the restitution of Monastery property.

There still remain some outstanding problems pertinent to the legitimacy of structures built upon 43.2 hectares of Monastery land. Seeking a solution to those is within the competences of the Ministry of Territorial Development and Public Works (MOTDPW). The Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, the Ministry of the Environment and Waters and the Religious Affairs Directorate shall notify in due course MOTDPW of the persisting problems while most insistently requesting that all issues pertaining to the legitimacy of facilities built on Monastery property be dealt with in the shortest terms possible. We hope to receive your position on this initiative before the activity is undertaken. Please note that the Management Plan cannot solve the problem and this cannot be a reason to stop the planning process.

We avail ourselves of this opportunity to inform Your Holiness that, in reference to a request by Bishop John, Abbot of Rila Monastery, on equalizing the boundaries of Rila Monastery Nature Park with the estate of the Holy Monastery of Rila, MOAF will soon forwarded a proposal to MOEW the necessary documents for increasing the territory of RMNP by inclusion in it of another 756.2 hectares of land belonging to the Monastery. The Ministry of the Environment and Waters will present and coordinate the proposal with you before the procedure of boundary and area changes in Park starts.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, the Ministry of the Environment and Waters and the Religious Affairs Directorate have every respect for the legitimate rights of ownership of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and highly appreciate the participation of representatives of the Holy Synod in the drawing up of the Management Plan for RMNP. The tree above said institutions are confident that the development of the Management Plan for the Nature Park must continue, and should include representatives of the Holy Synod.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, the Ministry of the Environment and Waters and the Religious Affairs Directorate unconditionally recognize the national and world religious and cultural significance of the Holy Monastery of Rila and the surrounding areas, and are of the opinion that the conservation and management of this unique spiritual and natural heritage in its unity and harmony merits special attention. We are convinced that the Holy Monastery of Rila and the Nature Park warrant a special management approach and mechanism.

While expressing our satisfaction with the declared willingness of the Holy Synod to thoroughly and carefully examine and determine the methods and forms of management of the Nature Park, we hereby inform you a Board of Trustees that would assume responsibility for the management of the Nature Park in compliance with the relevant legislation. We are willing to work out and present soon to your attention, a draft proposal on the structure, composition and functions of the said Board of Trustees, which we are ready to discuss with you following your consideration thereof.

The three above said Government institutions are hopeful that the Holy Synod, in its capacity as the private owner of lands within a protected area of natural and international cultural and conservation significance, will continue to participate, as constructively as heretofore, in the effort for developing an appropriate mechanism for its management.

In response to your request, enclosed hereto please find copies of:

1. The Protected Areas Act;
2. The Ordinance on the Development of Management Plans for Protected Areas;
3. The Memorandum of Understanding between the Governments of the United States of America and the Republic of Bulgaria on the Conservation of Biodiversity and Economic Development;
4. Decree # RD-310 dated June 26th, 2000 (promulgated in *State Gazette*, # 56/2000), on the re-categorization of parts of Rila National park into Rila Monastery Nature Park.

Appendix 3

**List of International Guests
at the Ecotourism Event,
whose participation was sponsored by the BCEG Project**

National Forum
“Ecotourism, Mountains and Protected Areas.
Partners in Prosperity”
Sofia, 02-05 October 2002

International Guests, Sponsored by the BCEG Project

1. **Art Pedersen**, United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Paris, France
2. **Brian White**, World Travel and Tourism Council, Vancouver, Canada
3. **Prof. Donald Hawkins**, George Washington University, BCEG Project Consultant, Washington D.C., USA
4. **Gabor Vereczi**, World Tourism Organization, Barcelona, Spain
5. **Oliver Hillel**, United Nations Environmental Program, Paris, France
6. **Sylvie Blangy**, the International Ecotourism Society, Montpellier, France
7. **Agnese Jakovica**, Marketing Manager of the Country Tourism Association, Riga, Latvia
8. **Alain Schneidenbach**, European Culture & Event Consult, Bad Nauheim, Germany
9. **Alla Pakina**, research scientist, Unique Territories Department, Russian Institute of Cultural and Natural Heritage, Moscow, Russia
10. **Dushica Trpchevska**, **Pene Penev**, Public Enterprise for Spatial and Urban Plans, Skopje, Macedonia
11. **Julian Ross**, Director of a Mountain Tourism NGO, Bistrita-Nasaud, Romania
12. **Michal Burian**, Chairman of the Czech Branch of the European Center for Eco Agro Tourism, Brno, Czech Republic
13. **Richard Tapper**, Director of Environment Business & Development Group, Kingston upon Thames, United Kingdom
14. **Stefan Skledar**, Manager, Rural Development Office, Brezovica, Slovenia

Appendix 4

Protocol Agreement for Cooperation between MOEW, MOE and MOAF

PROTOCOL AGREEMENT
FOR COOPERATION IN THE AREA OF ECOTOURISM
BETWEEN
THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND WATERS,
THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTS, AND
THE MINISTRY OF ECONOMY

The Ministry of Environment and Waters (MOEW), the Ministry of Economy (MOE) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests (MOAF) referred to hereinafter as “the Ministries” collectively:

- Recognize that ecotourism is an important national and regional tool for the introduction of sustainable practices in the area of tourism on national and regional levels and that it contributes to the conservation of natural landscapes and biodiversity, local traditions, life style and culture;
- Maintain that ecotourism is generally a small enterprise activity that is closely linked to rural and regional development strategies for local communities;
- Agree that the country’s protected landscapes and biodiversity combined with its history and culture are the cornerstones of favorable national tourism development model, but one that is not sufficiently utilized to date.
- Recognize the existence of a legal framework and significant institutional and organizational potential for ecotourism development.
- Believe that the active development and promotion of ecotourism will contribute to positive attitudes among visitors and citizens towards nature protection and the implementation of the principles of sustainable development, as well as to the diversification and increased attractiveness of the national tourist product.
- Applaud the achievements in ecotourism development already appearing in our country,
- Recognize the need to strengthen cooperation in the formation and implementation of governmental policy, as well as to share in the responsibilities and benefits, and undertaking of cooperative actions by all stakeholders in the direction of its development

With this protocol agreement the Ministries pledge their cooperation to realize Bulgaria’s capacity to develop ecotourism in the context of sustainable development and nature protection. We pledge our efforts to use broad dialogue and the development of partnerships among stakeholders from the private and public sector at national, regional and local levels. We believe this cooperation can only enhance the national image, the tourism product, nature protection, and economic growth.

Our Ministries endorse the general understanding of ECOTOURISM as travel that is conducted to relatively undisturbed natural areas where visitors can see and enjoy nature, accompanying cultural sites, and at the same time encourage their conservation, while maintaining low levels of impact. Ecotourism is also a business opportunity that encourages the development of all related services with a priority for small, local, enterprises that generate fair and equitable benefits to the people most responsible for the success of ecotourism. Ecotourism also contains important elements of environmental education, nature and cultural interpretation, and complements all forms of sustainable tourism.

As a demonstration of our commitment to these ideas the Ministries sign this protocol agreement and agree to the following:

1. Policy in the area of ecotourism

- To unite our efforts for the promotion of ecotourism in the country and to implement a policy of broad public dialogue by encouraging the participation of key stakeholders – governmental institutions, regional and local authorities, non-governmental organizations, the private sector – in the discussion of important issues related to the ecotourism in the country and in the making of decisions of national significance, concerning ecotourism, its development and promotion.
- To adopt the recommendations of the Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism from May 2002 and ensure that other relevant international documents in the area of ecotourism and sustainable development are reflected in the formation of governmental policy in this direction.
- To initiate and cooperate on a review of the existing legislation, regulations and plans in order to develop an enabling environment for ecotourism, conservation of biodiversity and natural landscape, business investments, improvement of the quality of ecotourism products and services, and the living status of local communities.

2. Mechanisms of Cooperation

- To appoint experts who will serve as long-term coordinators on ecotourism issues.
- To initiate the formation of a working group for ecotourism that will supervise and guide the finalization of the Draft National Ecotourism Strategy and its institutionalization.
- To support the finalization of the National Ecotourism strategy by the end of 2003, and to ensure it is harmonized with efforts to develop a National Tourism Development Plan.
- To organize consultative working meetings and form expert committees for the discussion of concrete issues of public significance in the area of ecotourism, which will involve stakeholders from national, regional and local level.
- To cooperate on the identification of resources for the promotion of ecotourism, to collaborate in the development and implementation of strategic documents, plans and programs in ecotourism.
- To provide methodological and expert assistance to regional and local authorities and to non-governmental associations in the development of relevant local and regional

strategies, and to realize ecotourism as part of operationalizing protected area management plans. In addition, we will provide the same assistance to municipal investment programs that promote ecotourism, to the creation of appropriate tourist products, as well as other initiatives encouraging the promotion of ecotourism.

- To collaborate on and encourage additional examples of public-private sector partnerships for the promotion and development of successful ecotourism models in the country.

3. Financial Mechanisms and Attracting Investments

- To mobilize existing financial resources and to cooperate in the development of mechanisms for long-term and sustainable financial mechanisms and investments for ecotourism.

- To collaborate on the review and endorsement of investment proposals that aim to promote the objectives and ideals of Bulgarian ecotourism.

- To collaborate on plans and programs used to attract ecotourism investment in the country.

4. Information Sharing and Ecotourism Promotion

- To develop joint programs campaigns and initiatives building public awareness in the area of ecotourism. These are efforts that contribute to the improved understanding of the relationship between ecotourism and the conservation of the country's biodiversity.

- To establish a national information network for ecotourism using existing visitors, tourist and information centers, as well as to support expansion of the network into other areas as part of the National tourism information system.

- To cooperate on the identification and utilization of opportunities to present Bulgaria as a competitive ecotourism destination nationally and internationally.

5. Training and Education

- To encourage and seek support for institutions of higher, intermediate, and vocational education to develop training and education curricula and materials in the area of ecotourism,

- To seek support for programs and to identify opportunities to orient and educated local authorities, non-governmental associations and local communities in ecotourism;

6. Quality Standards and Certification

- To encourage the development of standards for the quality of ecotourism products and services in the country. In addition to promote research and popularization of best practices and volunteer schemes that support ecotourism certification,

The Ministry of Environment and Waters, the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests invite all stakeholders to accept this protocol agreement as a sign of our support and readiness to cooperate in nurturing ecotourism development in Bulgaria and to becoming a leader in ecotourism development in the region.

Signed on 04 October, 2002, at the National Forum “Protected Areas, Mountains and Ecotourism – Partners in Prosperity” in three identical copies, one for each party, by:

DOLORES ARSENOVA
Minister, MOEW

NIKOLAY VASSILEV
Minister, MOE

MEHMED DIKME
Minister, MAF

Appendix 5

Park Fund Protocol

PROTOCOL

Today, on the 7th of October 2002, a meeting was held in the Ministry of Finance between the Deputy Minister of Environment and Water - Fatme Iliaz, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Forests – Meglena Ploughchieva, Deputy Minister of Finances – Krassimir Katev.

The meeting was attended also by:

Nona Karadjova – Director of Strategies, European Integration and International Relations Directorate, MOEW

Vladimir Petrov – Director of Financing of Governmental Bodies and Programs and Security Funds; Svetla Panova – Head of Department World Bank, IMF and G - 24 Dessislava Lazova – chief expert - MOAF

In the presence of Jay Lee – USAID, Environmental Officer
Peter Hetz, Kamelia Georgieva - BCEG Project of the USAID

Purpose: Park Trust Fund (Parks Fund)

Funding by international donors and support on behalf of the Government of Bulgaria.

The participants in the meeting agreed that the Parks Fund is a relevant mechanism for long-term financial support to the Bulgaria's protected areas system, as well as for projects for sustainable development in municipalities in their adjacent territories.

For the achievement of the purpose of the Parks Fund:

1. The Government of the Republic of Bulgaria will participate in the fund with the amount up to 12,5 million leva in the next five years starting in 2003.
2. The commitment of the GOB will fund up to 30% of other donors contributions. These funds will be released to the Parks Fund in response to proved commitment of any national and/or international sources contributing to the Fund.
3. The Republic of Bulgaria commits to the provision of 100 000 leva for the Fund in 2003 as matching funds to other donors' contributions.

This commitment will be reflected in a letter to the World Bank, requesting an additional 2 million US dollars, to supplement the GEF component of the Rehabilitation and Sustainable Forest Management Project, Biodiversity Conservation in Forest Management Project.

Deputy minister:

Deputy minister:

Deputy minister:

F. Iliaz

M. Plugchieva:

K. Katev

Appendix 6

Proposal from MOAF, MOEW and MOE to the World Bank

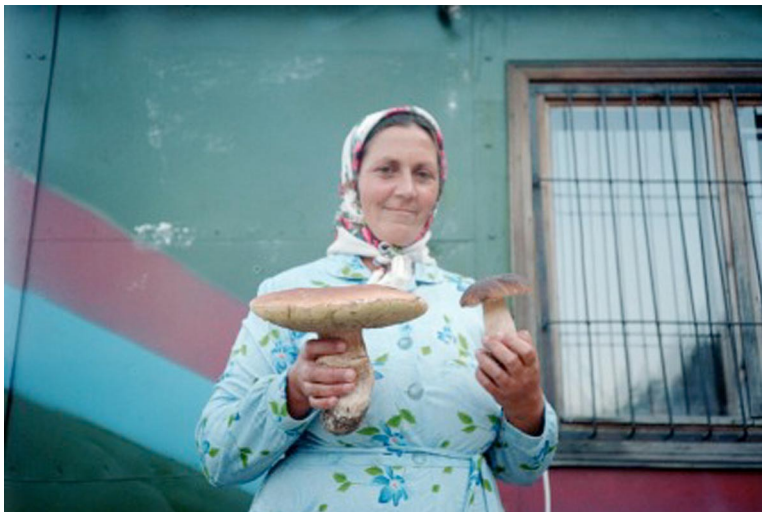
Appendix 7

Bulgaria Parks Fund Prospectus

Bulgaria Parks Fund Prospectus

Bulgaria presents an exceptional opportunity for biodiversity conservation in Europe. Poised at the confluence of three major eco-regions, its biodiversity profile includes not only a wide array of species, but also an unusually high level of endemism and endangered species. The extent of intact natural ecosystems in Bulgaria is unmatched in Europe.

The Government of Bulgaria (GOB) seeks to ensure the long-term protection of biodiversity through a trust fund designed to support the country's protected areas. The strategic objectives of the fund will be infrastructure and other capital investment, park management and tourism development projects, and other long-term needs of the park system. The GOB intends to match an initial public investment of 12.5 million leva (US\$ 6.25 million dollars) with support from international sources. In addition to this investment in the fund, the GOB aims to support the existing annual capital development budget of the protected areas system at a cost of 1.5 million leva (US\$ 750,000 dollars) on an annual basis. The Government of Bulgaria will continue to fund the recurring operational costs (a similar amount) of key parks from annual budgets.



Bulgaria: Key to European and Regional Biodiversity Conservation

Bulgaria ranks first in Europe in the number of animal species within its territory. Its National Parks are home to some 4,000 invertebrate species of which about one quarter are a conservation priority, and 300 vertebrate species two-thirds of which are protected under both

Bulgarian and international law. Some of the most significant populations of large mammals in Europe reside here: red deer, wolf, brown bear, and Balkan chamois. Bulgaria ranks fifth in Europe in the number of higher plants within its territory, with 3,567 species.

Quick Facts about Bulgaria's Biodiversity

- 67% of all species of fishes, amphibians and reptiles are a conservation priority
- 90% of all bird species are of high conservation significance
- Bulgaria has the second largest number of bat species in Europe and 60% of these species are found within Bulgaria's three National Parks. Bulgarian and international law protect all of them
- Fifty-eight plant species endemic to Bulgaria, and 142 endemic to the Balkans
- 105 relic plant species
- 179 plant species in the Bulgarian Red Book
- 92 plant species protected under Bulgarian law and 56 under international law

Bulgaria's biodiversity is closely linked to thousands of years of traditional and sustainable use. Many plant species continue to be used in daily life. Today, Bulgaria is the number one exporter of medicinal plants in Europe. Eighteen species of edible mushrooms with high commercial value can be found in Bulgaria's protected areas, from a total of 2000 naturally occurring species. These include several varieties of bolete, chanterelle, and parasol mushrooms. Many rural communities support themselves through collection of such non-timber resources. Approximately 1.5 million leva (US\$ 750,000) is derived from wild blueberry

collection alone in Bulgaria's three National Parks.

Established Framework and Strong Commitment to Conservation

Following its commitment to the *International Biodiversity Convention* in 1992 with the *Environmental Protection Act*, Bulgaria adopted the first *National Strategy for the Conservation of Biological Diversity* in 1994. In 1998 the *Protected Areas Act* established the legal framework for the declaration and management of protected areas, the principal conservation tool of the Bulgarian government. Protected areas encompass 5% of the country's territory in the following categories: 55 reserves; 3 national parks; 474 natural landmarks; 35 managed reserves; 9 nature parks; 426 nature monuments; and, 103 protected sites. In July of 2001, the nation's first management plans for Rila and Central Balkan National Parks were passed into law.

Bulgaria passed the first *Medicinal Plants Act* in Europe, regulating the conservation and sustainable use of these valuable natural resources in the pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and food industry. The new

Bulgaria Parks Fund Prospectus

Biodiversity Conservation Act will provide for the establishment of a national ecological network in keeping with NATURA 2000. It will define the responsibilities of the State, municipalities and individual citizens in protecting the diversity of plant and animal species within and outside the protected areas system.



A Parks Fund

Presently the (Bulgarian) National Environment Protection Fund addresses some of the needs of the national parks system, but this source of support is curtailed by fiduciary consolidation required for Bulgaria's entry into the European Union. Regular financial assistance needs to be expanded to the nation's entire protected area network. A new Parks Fund will ensure that stable funding for the national protected areas system is maintained with priority for those areas central to the nation's biodiversity conservation agenda. Specifically, the Parks Fund will support infrastructure and other capital investment, training, applied research, tourism development projects, management plans, and other long-term needs of the park system.

The Parks Fund will provide assistance in four forms:

- Grants to park directorates;
- Payment to private contractors for goods and services provided for protected areas;
- Loans to private sector where operations are directly related to beneficial practices in protected areas; and,
- Matching grants to villages, associations, municipalities, NGOs, who invest in activities that benefit protected areas.

Bulgaria Parks Fund Prospectus

Governance

The Parks Fund will be an independent trust managed by the existing National Trust Eco Fund (NTEF). The NTEF is an established financial management mechanism prescribed within Bulgarian environmental legislation. The NTEF has demonstrated satisfactory management of more than 20 million SFr of debt-for-nature funds and has jointly managed projects with the Danish Development Agency and The World Bank. The NTEF Board of Trustees and a Contributor's Committee will govern the Parks Fund. The Contributors Committee shall include donors that provide 10% or more of monies expended in each year and will provide oversight and review of projects specifically corresponding to their investments in the Park Fund. The NTEF will also enlist a specific Advisory Committee for Protected Areas that will review and advise on Parks Fund projects. Composition of the Parks Fund Advisory Committee will consist of Park Directors, Park Advisory Councils, the private sector, as well as regional and national associations related to the themes of the Fund.

The Parks Fund will be capable of meeting rigorous administrative and auditing norms. The fund will develop concrete performance criteria that will be measured on an annual basis, made available to donors and the public in the form of an annual report that will be independently verified.

Fund-Raising Strategy

The fund-raising objective of the Parks Fund is to achieve a sufficient size to guarantee that the capital costs and project development needs of Bulgaria's protected areas are met on a consistent basis. The goal is to generate at least 1.5 million leva per year (US\$ 750,000) for approved management plans in the protected area system. We will accomplish this through an endowment, pass-through and sinking funds. Based on the success of the Fund's first years, it is expected to expand, – providing larger amounts of funding for more parks in the protected areas network. The Government of Bulgaria expects to place 12.5 million leva (US\$ 6.25 million) into the endowment, with the intent of matching this contribution from international sources.

Bulgaria Parks Fund Prospectus

The Parks Fund seeks financial assistance from national and international sources, including but not limited to:

- Government of Bulgaria:
12.5 million leva or US\$6.25 million (2002-2003)
- Multi- and bi-lateral donors:
6.25 million leva or US\$ 3.13 million (2003-2007)
- Private Foundations:
6.25 million leva, or US\$ 3.13 million (2003-2007)
- Domestic private sector:
>10% Budget (2010)

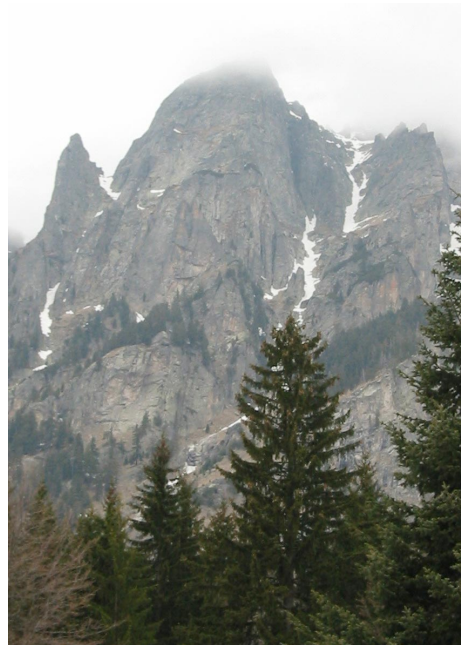
The Parks Fund hopes to secure financial commitments from major donors during 2002 and 2003, and to complete the endowment by 2007. As a priority, the Parks Fund governors and executive bureau will develop strategies on an ongoing basis for additional fund raising, especially revenue generation within protected areas.



National Parks of Bulgaria

Rila

Established in 1992, Rila is the largest of Bulgaria's National Parks. Approximately sixty percent of its total area lies at altitudes above 2,000 meters and its tallest peak, Mussala, is the tallest in the Balkans. Ninety percent of the Park's ecosystem is in a natural state – highly rare in a European country. Four reserves – Parangalitza, Skakavitza, Ibar and Central Rilski – comprise about one-fifth of the Park's territory. Of these, Central Rilski is by far the largest reserve in the Balkans and one of the largest in all Europe. The park name Rila originates from the Thracian 'roula', which means 'plenty of water'. There are 140 lakes in the park and some of the largest rivers in the Balkans have their sources here.



- Established in 1992
- Area: 81,046 hectares
- Highest peak: Mussala (2,925 m);
40 peaks above 2,000 meters
- 90% of ecosystems are natural
- Woodlands cover 52.5% of territory
- 4 reserves totaling 16,222 hectares
- IUCN Category 2

Pirin

Established in 1969, Pirin National Park is the oldest in Bulgaria. Though the smallest in territory, it boasts the largest diversity of natural assets and landmarks. The park is a World Cultural and Natural Heritage Convention site. The largest part of its territory lies above 2,000 meters and it has scores of peaks above 2,000 meters and 113 caves. There are two nature reserves within the Park's territory – Bayovi Dupki/Djindjiritza and Yulen.



- Established in 1969
- Area: 40,333 hectares
- Highest peak: Vihren (2,915 m);
75 peaks above 2,000 meters
- Two-thirds of ecosystems are natural
- Woodlands cover 43% of the territory
- 2 reserves totaling 6,015 hectares
- 113 caves
- IUCN Category 2



Central Balkan

Established in 1991, Central Balkan National Park has nine reserves that comprise one-third of its territory: *Boatin, Tzarichina, Kozya Stena, Steneto, Stara Reka, Djendema, Northern Djendem, Peeshti Skali and Sokolna*. The Park is famous for its many waterfalls, one of which, the *Raisko Praskalo* is the highest in Bulgaria at 125 meters. The deepest cave in Bulgaria, *Raichova Dupka*, is also located in Central Balkan National Park.

- Established in 1991
- Area: 71,670 hectares
- Highest peak: Botev (2,376 m); 5 peaks above 2,000 meters
- 70% of ecosystems are natural
- Woodlands cover 52.5% of territory
- 9 reserves totaling 20,020 hectares
- Dozens of natural caves and waterfalls
- IUCN Category 2

Bulgaria Parks Fund Prospectus

Contacts

The Parks Fund is being developed by the Ministry of Environment and Waters of Bulgaria, with the support of the Biodiversity Conservation and Economic Growth (BCEG) Project.

The BCEG Project is funded by the United States Agency for International Development and its Mission in Bulgaria. It is implemented by Associates in Rural Development (ARD), Inc.

For more information regarding the Parks Fund, or its supporting agencies, please contact:

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Appendix 8

Introduction to the Global Conservation Fund/Conservation International

Appendix 9

PAN Parks Frequently Asked Questions

Appendix 10

Fundraising Report by Jared Hardner

ARD-Bulgaria
**Biodiversity Conservation &
Economic Growth
Project**
Sponsored by
USAID & the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria

MEMO Trust Fund Development for Bulgarian Parks System

This memorandum summarizes activities performed for the development of a trust fund for Bulgaria's Park System under the Bulgaria Conservation and Economic Growth Project (ARD/USAID).

Grants Research

During the June-July time period 4 days were expended on grants research. The process involved three steps:

- 1) identification of foundations with a record of grant-making to conservation trust funds, and/or work in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union;
- 2) communications with personal contacts within major foundations to assess interest in a Bulgarian trust fund *and* current status of foundation giving as a result of the 2001-2002 financial downturn in global equity markets;
- 3) formal solicitations of interest to foundations through their standard application process. Exhibit 1 summarizes the entities contacted and their responses.

Prospectus

During the August-September period, three days were expended designing, writing, and producing a prospectus for the Bulgaria Parks Fund. The prospectus was submitted in electronic format (PDF) to ARD and subsequently used for fund raising purposes with the Global Environment Facility.

EXHIBIT 1: GRANT-MAKING ENTITIES CONTACTED REGARDING BULGARIA PARKS FUND		
<i>Grant –Making Entity</i>	<i>Contact</i>	<i>Result</i>
Arthur B. Schultz Foundation	Erik Schultz, info@absfoundation.org	Outside of geographic focus
David and Lucile Packard Foundation	Scott Rehmus, srehmus@Packard.org 300 Second Street, Suite 200 Los Altos, California 94022 (650) 948-7658	Outside of geographic focus
DOEN Foundation	Karin Hoekstra, karin@doen.nl	Reviewing proposal
Global Conservation Fund Conservation International	Marianne Guerin-McManus, m.guerin-mcmanus@conservation.org 1919 M Street, NW Suite 600 Washington, D.C. 20036 (202) 912-1031	Outside of geographic focus
Global Environment Facility	Emilia Battaglini, Ebattaglini@worldbank.org Mailstop: H 5-503, The World Bank 1818 H St, NW, Washington, DC 20433 (202) 473-3232	Proposal under consideration
Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation	Pic Walker, pic.walker@moore.org PO Box 29910 San Francisco, CA 94129-0910 (415) 561-7743	Not considering new projects currently
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation	Avecita Chicchon, achiccho@macfound.org 140 South Dearborn Street, Suite 1100 Chicago, IL 60603-5285 (312) 920-6288	Outside of geographic focus
Rockefeller Foundation	Global Inclusion Program, GLOBAL@rockfound.org	Outside of geographic focus
Oak Foundation	Amy Elkes, amy@oakfnd.org	Only supports marine projects in Europe
Soros Foundation – New York / Open Society Foundation – Sofia	Sophie Pompea, spompea@sorosny.org (212) 548 0338	Not within thematic focus
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation	info@hewlett.org 2121 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park, CA 94025 (650) 234-4500	Outside of geographic focus

NOTE: PLEASE DO NOT CONTACT THESE INDIVIDUALS BEFORE NOTIFYING JARED HARDNER